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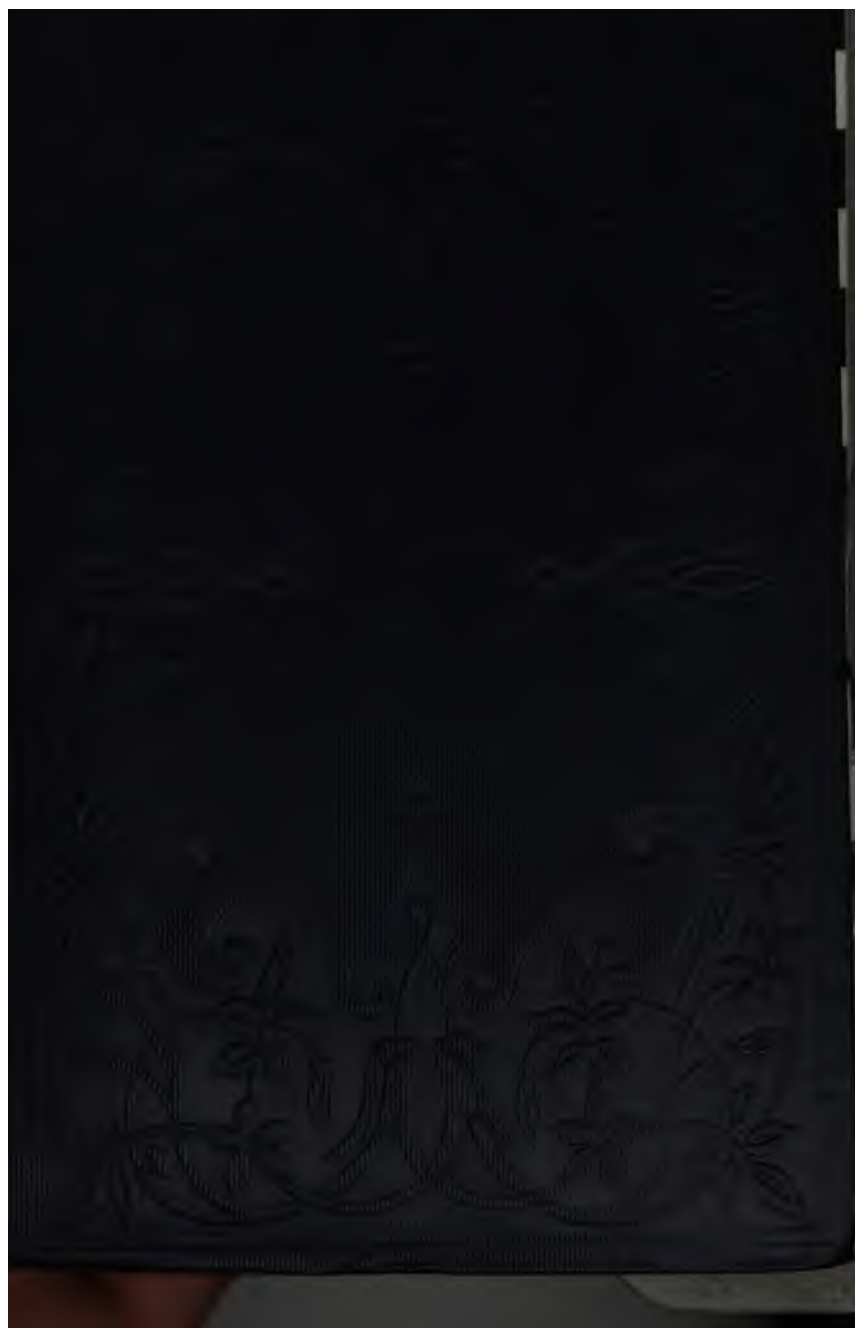
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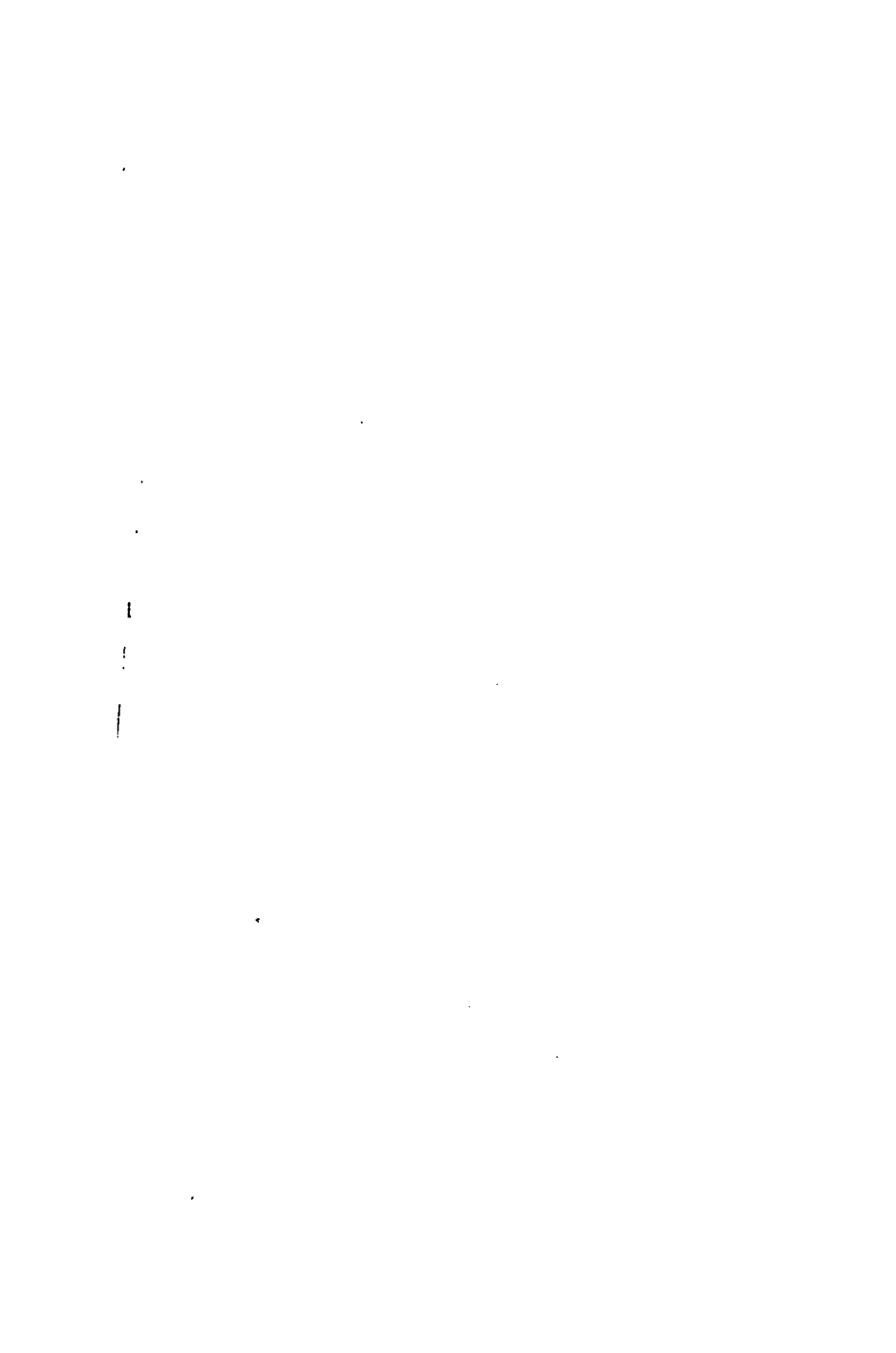
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# THE END:

OR,

THE PROXIMATE SIGNS OF THE CLOSE  
OF THIS DISPENSATION.

BY

THE REV. JOHN CUMMING, D.D. F.R.S.E.

Then cometh the end.—1 Cor. xv. 24.

The harvest is the end of the world.—Matt. xiii. 39.

*Fifty Thousand.*

LONDON:

JOHN FARQUHAR SHAW,

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1855.

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JOHN CHILDS AND SON, BUNGAY.

## P R E F A C E.

THE topics unfolded in this work are solemn and intensely interesting, full of warning, comfort, privilege, duty, and hope.

The first eight Lectures were delivered in the Scottish Church, Halkin Street, Belgrave Square. Epitomes of them were given in Glasgow, Brighton, and Bath. The remaining Lectures treat of the joyous prospects stretching out before the children of God, and of the consolations that flow from the blessed hopes of resurrection, reünion, and recognition in the age to come. In this weary world we need lights shining down from above, and sunshine transmitted from the future, that life's heavy load may be light-



ened, and the heart of the traveller cheered and strengthened to bear it.

The Author has endeavoured to anticipate and dispose of every reasonable objection in the body of the work. But as these Lectures are not controversial, but instructive, practical, and cheering, he has dwelt almost entirely on topics having this last tendency. He trusts and believes he has avoided all dogmatism on subjects sometimes difficult and always delicate; and in the belief that, prayerfully read, his work will not be without good fruit, he commits it to the reader, and commends it to the blessing of God.

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# PREFACE

## TO THE

### SECOND EDITION.

THE Author has heard with sincere thankfulness to God that four thousand copies of this work have been sold in the course of three months. In preparing a new edition he has added several illustrative extracts, altered and improved the structure of the book to a considerable extent, and otherwise made it more plain, direct, and useful. Subsequent events, and phenomena in almost every part of the earth, have deepened the views and convictions embodied in these pages. No reader watching the solemn signs of the day can fail to see that the leading positions and applications of prophecy laid down in this work are receiving increasing light from every part of the earth.

The writer asks no deference beyond what is due to truth, and courts rather than deprecates sober and impartial criticism. That the conclusions arrived at, however sound, should be accepted by all, is more than prophecy leads us to expect. Too many will exclaim on the very verge of the advent, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

Where there is reasonable ground for difference of opinion among true Christians, the Author hopes he has avoided dogmatism and presumption; meekly expressing an opinion where it would be rashness and presumption to enunciate a decision. He most earnestly prays that it may please God to make this work awakening, sanctifying, comforting; and thus, while the reader receives the good, He to whom it is justly due, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, One God, will receive the glory.

*October, 1855.*

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## THE END.

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### I.

#### THE STUDY OF PROPHECY.

THE remarks in this Lecture are strictly and properly prefatory to some expositions of interesting thoughts on momentous subjects, more or less dimly disclosed in the page of prophecy for our study, learning, and comfort. Plainly additional to those great essential doctrines which are the governing topics of every faithful sermon, known by the name of evangelical or vital Christianity, there are in the Bible collateral and incidental truths, or indications of the mind, the purposes, and the great schemes of God, which because revealed, however obscurely revealed, are entitled to our devout, our prayerful, our humble investigation. We may in the sacred page of prophecy reverently gaze where we may

not boldly tread ; we may prayerfully study and meekly state the results of that study without incurring the risk, or at least without justly provoking the charge, of presumptuous daring, or of assuming the prerogative of the prophet, or pretending to the inspiration of the evangelist. They that refuse to study prophecy on the one hand, and they who specify "the day and the hour" upon the other, are equally guilty of irreverence to the sacred volume, as they equally plunge into extremes. If the latter, namely, specifying the day and the hour, as some have attempted, be injury to men ; the other, or refusing to study what God has inspired for our learning, must be dishonourable to God. The times in which we live, the startling rapidity with which event thunders on event, the speed and splendour of those celestial and terrestrial phenomena that sweep through the sky and light up the wide world as with some mysterious moral and surely significant light, are attracting the attention of statesmen, interesting the public journalist, and awakening inquiries everywhere. And if these excite the interest of the world, and are regarded and pronounced on in the light which it is able to strike out, we cannot see why the Christian should be uninterested in what intensely agitates the world, and still less why he

should ever come to the conclusion that this blessed book is an epitome of past and exhausted facts without any present bearing, or that the world has now got a-head of the Bible, instead of cherishing the magnificent and just conclusion that the Bible is always in advance of the world. It alone has chalked out the world's course before that world commenced it. If the prophetic page be a chart, descriptive of the remainder of our earthly journey, as it has been well and often called, why should the Christian voyager refuse to contrast what he sees outside his vessel with what is written within on the sacred document? Why should voyagers to happy and blessed shores refuse to ascertain at intervals their latitude, their longitude, and where upon life's stormy and solemn main they may now be who have such precious things at stake, and such bright and blessed hopes beyond? The most prayerful and patient student may see furthest, not because more instructed than others, but because he has longer and deeper and more prayerfully studied. All will admit that time is not eternity; that this current which we call time, this streamlet, this tiny streamlet, which we think so mighty, nevertheless so minute in relation to infinite space, will one day merge in the eternal main. If God has given hints of the hour, and



indications of the places, which we have reached in the course of its flow, can it be irreverent to study them? or rather is it not infidel to refuse to read and note what God has written? For one caution contained in the Bible against specification where there should be none, there are ten warnings against that infidelity that will not look, or read, or ponder at all. There is a very solemn one in the Second Epistle of St. Peter, where, alluding to certain persons not mindful of the words which were spoken, he says, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Our Lord's rebuke of the Scribes and Pharisees is very suggestive. They watched the phenomena of nature, and interpreted them in the light of nature's laws; but criminally and inconsistently they shut their eyes to the yet more important phenomena of the moral world, and refused to mark or interpret them in the light of God's written and inspired volume. Unfulfilled prophecy is a lawful, important, and even dutiful subject of study. At present it is eminently seasonable. Why was it written? Does some one answer, "In order that when the event takes

place we may be convinced of the truth of Scripture, and converted"? Christians are convinced and converted already. And when the last fulfilment of its last words takes place, at the close of this dispensation, its influence as evidences will be unnecessary, for we shall see Him as he is; the harvest will have been reaped, and the time for conversion will have closed, and eternity shall for ever receive us. Besides, if unfulfilled prophecy is not to be studied till it be fulfilled, what is the meaning of calling the last book in the Bible, not Apocrypha, as some people seem to read it—a hidden thing; but Apocalypse, as the Spirit calls it—an explained thing. The meaning of Apocalypse is, something explained, something revealed. A revelation is meant to disclose what was hidden; a sign-post is meant to teach what may be understood, in order that we may be guided; a revelation is meant to be read, in order that we may be instructed. And lest there should be any mistake upon this matter, there is on the very threshold of the Apocalypse this most interesting inscription; not, Unhappy and liable to peril is the man that reads it, but, "Happy is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy." The reason for the study and understanding of unfulfilled prophecy increases and grows stronger every day.

The nearer that we come to the close, the intenser the light that will be cast on the prophecies that remain yet unfulfilled. Just as in a long line of lamps in the aisle of a magnificent cathedral, the greater the number of the lamps that are lighted in succession, the greater is the indirect light cast upon the remaining lamps not yet lighted ; so here, the more numerous the prophecies that are fulfilled in the past, the more indirect light they shed upon the prophecies that remain to be fulfilled in the future ; till a sober, prayerful investigator of the residue of the unfulfilled will, ere the end come, arrive at a conviction of their application, an apprehension of their import, unprecedented and unattained in the experience of any previous interpreter in the history of the church of Christ.

To show that prophecies were meant, some of them at least, to be understood before they were fulfilled, we may state, that two hundred and forty years before, Isaiah specifies Cyrus by name, points out the epoch and year at which he, as the head of the Persian empire, was to deliver God's own beloved people. Was this clear prediction an impenetrable enigma ? The prophecy that Moses announced, " A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up like unto me," the Jew did not postpone, as a subject of unintelligible

study, till the Prophet came ; he understood and fed upon the promise, and was saved, supported, and comforted by it, while yet unfulfilled. Again, the prophecy in Genesis, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come," the Jew did not pass by in his Bible, and say, "This is an unfulfilled prophecy ; it will be time enough to study this when the Shiloh comes." No ; he regarded it as Peter does prophecy, as a light, however dim, still shining in a dark place, until the day-star arise on the heart, and we shall see clearly. When Isaiah specifies the birth of the mighty God, the Prince of Peace, the Man of Sorrows, the Emmanuel, God with us, who was to die, to be crucified, to be an atonement, the pious Jew did not say, "This Messiah is not come ? it will be time enough to read the 53rd chapter of Isaiah when Messiah comes." No ; he fed upon a Christ that was to come, just as sweetly as we feed by faith upon a Christ that has come ; and the unfulfilled prophecy, though not so clear, was yet as dear to him as is to us the fulfilled and recorded announcement of the gospel, "He was slain for us, and rose again for our justification." The prophet Micah gives the very name of the place of the birth of Messiah : the prophet Malachi gives all but the name of his messenger that was to precede

him. Was it possible that a pious Jew would overlook all these unfulfilled prophecies, or carelessly wait till their fulfilment? or is it not far more probable, nay, is it not absolutely certain, that these were the scattered stars that shone from the whole canopy of Judaism, and shed down their bright rays from age to age, and guided the Jew to heaven, to happiness, to glory, until the Sun himself emerged from beneath the horizon, and shed down the splendour of meridian day, and all the stars that preceded were lost in the brightness of his rising? I think it was scarcely credible that a pious Jew could possibly mistake the meaning of these, or that he could possibly pass them by as of no use to him, because unfulfilled. On the contrary, it is certain that the Jew, the pious Jew, or, if we may be allowed the phrase, the Christian Jew,—and Adam was a Christian, Abraham was a Christian, Abel was a Christian, in the best and in the highest sense of that word,—so clearly understood these unfulfilled prophecies that he pondered upon them, and talked of them when he lay down and when he rose up. Reports of these ancient prophecies, as understood by the Jews who read them, spread over heathendom itself like fragments of driftwood across the Mediterranean Sea, retaining the names and inscriptions of memorable facts, and

were read and deciphered by Tacitus, by Seneca, by hundreds of the heathen, who have left on record that about this time the prophecy prevailed in Judea, that One would come who would take the supremacy and wield the sceptre. We have irresistible proofs that the Jews did study unfulfilled prophecy. If they studied the unfulfilled predictions of a Saviour that was to come to suffer, ought we to shut our eyes to the unfulfilled predictions of a Saviour that is to come to reign? If unfulfilled prophecy was to them a light shining in a dark place, may not unfulfilled prophecy be to us a still brighter light, shining, it may be, in a brighter place, brighter far than all the lights around, and giving us sweet hopes and blessed expectancies, that make the believer even now lift up his head because his redemption draweth nigh? The predictions of the ruin of Babylon are so minute that the most cursory interpreter of them must have thoroughly understood them before they were fulfilled. The graphic predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem were so specific that few fair readers could have failed to understand them, and, in fact, the Christians in Jerusalem, acquainted with their meaning, just prior to the downfall of that miserable yet magnificent capital, escaped and fled to Pella. They read the signs given by our Lord of its approaching

catastrophe ; they gathered the very date of that catastrophe from the elements that he had before laid down ; they acted upon their apprehension of future and unfulfilled prophecy, and to them it was the means of their escape from impending ruin. The description given by St. Paul of the Man of Sin to the Thessalonians was prophecy. The Thessalonians were expecting not Christ's advent, but they were persuaded that Christ was actually in the midst of them. Now the apostle writes to say, " You are not to suppose that Christ is yet come ;" and he shows how a certain great development of one he calls the Man of Sin should first come ; and only after he had come to his maturity they might expect the advent of Christ, the consummation and the end. Now that significant prediction, that minute delineation, of the character of the then future Man of Sin, would be utterly useless if we were unable to understand it, and thus see that Christ would not come till this Man of Sin had first appeared on the earth. And therefore if we may read unfulfilled prophecy at all, surely it is meant that, by comparing outer facts with the written record, we may come to a proximate conclusion what place we occupy in the march of time, and what is our relative nearness to, or distance from, the great epochs that end that dispensation in which angels are the specta-

tors and we the responsible actors. When the apostle lays down characteristics of the last days, is it not meant to give us marks by which we may ascertain or anticipate the eve of this dispensation? and is it not our duty to read what Paul says are the marks of the last days? And when we have done so, what then? shut the book and wait for the end? No; surely it is then our duty to compare existing facts with revealed features; and to judge by the relative plainness, minuteness, and accuracy of the coincidence, whether we are arrived at the last days, or whether they are still beyond us.


In the course of the following Lectures I do not pretend to find so irresistible proofs of the nearness of the end of this dispensation that all shall be constrained, by the force of a logic that none can answer, to conclude that it is certain that the end is not far remote: but if I present the characteristics of the end as sketched by an inspired pen; and if I gather the facts of the day as recorded in every public paper, and in authentic documents to which all have access; and if I contrast predicted and inspired characteristics with actual and current facts; I need not dogmatically infer my judgment is absolutely certain, but I may give you *data* on which you can conclude whether my inference humbly drawn be



correct and unexaggerated or not. One would think all men would naturally rejoice to have some intimation of the nearness of the end. But people seem to be smitten with fear when you speak to them of this dispensation drawing to its close; they say, "What an awful thing! how dreadful!" And yet the hope of the end is never so set forth in the Bible. Are you so enamoured of sickness that you have no longing for the resurrection body, no more the clinging garment of decay, but the beauteous robe of immortality and incorruption? Are you so fond of aches, and ills, and sorrows, and losses, and bereavements, and pains, and battle, and famine, and plague, and pestilence, that you do not wish them to be done with? It seems to me that every statement in this blessed book inspires and sustains the delightful conclusion, that the nearer the great issue comes, the happier God's people should feel; for the sound that shall ring sweet and audible from the skies amidst the crash of nations, and the overturning of thrones, and the dissolution of dynasties, and wars, and rumours of wars, will be, "Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." And if I should be able only to point out a few weeds floating upon the sea that indicate we are approaching the great continent of glory; if I should be able to give only an Alpine

flower here and there, however fragile, yet a sweet messenger of the coming spring, every true Christian ought to rejoice that there are the multiplying tokens of a day when a *genesis* shall pass upon the earth better and brighter than the first one, and a Paradise shall be the coronal of time more glorious than that which was its dawn.

Students of prophecy are increasing every day. And a very singular fact it is, that while there are remaining differences about some points, there are lessening differences about the essential elements of unfulfilled prophecy. Whilst we differ about some difficult details, we do not differ in the essential and glorious outlines. Between, for instance, my own views as gathered from the Bible, and those of some I esteem and value, there are a few points of divergence in details. There are denominations in the school of prophecy, just as there are denominations in the school of Christianity. Among these there are disagreements about the specific application of certain passages; but there is no difference about the crowning event, on the hope and expectancy of Him who is to sway the sceptre, and to reign over a reclaimed and a happy world; about the restoration of God's ancient people; or about the impending destruction of Babylon: and probably the almost unanimous conclusion would be,



that we stand at this moment on the margin of events far more stupendous and startling than any that have yet occurred ; and that soon, very soon, the voice may break forth from many quarters, " Behold, the Bridegroom cometh ; rise and trim your lamps, and go out to meet him." Those multiplying voices, lifted up in every Church, and in no Church more widely than in the national Church of this land, at different places by different men, all intimating, as they gather from the sacred page, the dawn of a new and a nobler era, are the voices of the sentinels of the outposts of a mighty army, giving token of the approaching conflict, and stirring up every one to prepare for trial and yet more for glory. And the glow that these students of prophecy have kindled is not the mere phosphorescence that exudes rather than shines from decay, but the light that will shine more and more unto the perfect day. It will be admitted by all, that those who have studied the subject most may be able not to dictate, but to help most those who have studied the subject least. The spies that went into the Promised Land brought back the clusters of ripe grapes ; and the children in the desert tasted them, and that taste told them they were not delusion, but the earnest and first-fruits of a fertile and a glorious soil. Some students

may have advanced so near the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem that their bivouac may be in its brightest light; they may have taken notice of its towers, and marked well its battlements and bulwarks; and from their inspection and study, prayerfully made, without dogmatism and without presumption, they may bring back cheering reports that will brighten our hopes, raise our affections, and enable us to feel as we never felt before, that our treasure should be where our heart has been, even where Christ is. And when we make an attempt to do so, it is not fair for newspapers to put in paragraphs, saying, "Such a one has fixed the close of this world, such a one has specified the end of this dispensation." This is not just; it is not true. We may give data on which a probable conclusion may be based; which is surely legitimate: but to mount the prophet's throne or sit in the prophet's chair, and predict, where it is our duty only to interpret, would be positively profane altogether. I must make another and very important distinction, and it is this: you must always distinguish between preaching the vital truths of the gospel, and explaining the subsidiary truths of unfulfilled prophecy. Not many a time I hope, but sometimes, a preacher has ventured to state too strongly what is only indicated dimly as the fulfilment of pro-

phesy. His interpretation of the prophecy has not been fulfilled, and weak-minded persons have instantly leaped to the conclusion, that his explanations of vital religion were to be classed in the same category as his expositions of unfulfilled prophecy; and because his expositions of prophecy have not been answered by events, they assert his expositions of vital doctrine must necessarily be untrue also. This is not right. There is a broad distinction. When I preach the truths of evangelical and Protestant Christianity, I assert each one with all the confidence with which an evangelist wrote it, or an apostle preached it. I know in whom I have believed; that Jesus died for my sins is not an equivocal or a doubtful thing, but absolutely certain; and that the weakest and the worst and the oldest of sinners are welcome to share in all the virtues of his atoning sacrifice is not a may be, or a peradventure, but absolutely certain, and worthy of all acceptance. But when I expound prophecy, I must add, "My interpretation may be wrong; my inference may be erroneous." But if wrong as an interpreter of unfulfilled prophecy, I know that I am not wrong as a preacher of Christ's precious and saving gospel. But suppose I should make an erroneous application in interpreting unfulfilled prophecy; suppose I should

draw a wrong inference ; this ought not to give offence ; if you see it is wrong, reject it ; this is the highest compliment to me, the greatest duty to yourselves. But if you find there are sufficient *data* to justify the conclusion I have arrived at, then it is your duty to accept it. Only do not confound the exposition of the everlasting gospel, about which all Christians are agreed, with interpretations of unfulfilled prophecy, about which the best and the holiest may differ. If you dissent from me in this, that Christ is God, and that He is the only name by which we can be saved, you are in fatal error ; but if you differ from my interpretation of prophecy, I hold you are a brother and a Christian notwithstanding. In the very broad fields of evangelical and vital religion, we walk together as brethren of one mind ; but in the by-paths, in the intricate windings, on the side-roads of unfulfilled prophecy, we may agree to diverge, and be Christians still walking in the way that leads to glory. I do not mean or wish to dogmatize ; and if I should use an expression too strong where one should tread so delicately, it must be attributed to the imperfection of the speaker.

The dispensation in which we have all played a part has lasted now 1800 years. It had its commencement ; it must also have its close.

What varied scenes has it witnessed ; what events has it swept over ; what solemn and startling phenomena have characterized it from its commencement until now ! It has rushed over the sorrows and the joys of millions ; it has hurried over births and deaths, and bridals and burials ; over sick-beds and graves, the deeds of the wicked, the accomplishments of the just ; laden with wrecks and blessings, and charged with responsibility devolving upon every human being that takes his place and bears a part in it. It has looked upon the fires that consumed the first martyrs ; it has gazed upon the growth of the Western Apostasy. It has witnessed the rise and the growing splendour of the Crescent ; and within the last few months it has seen that Crescent wane till it verges on the eve of an extinction from which it is never destined to recover. It has beheld the Waldenses amid the Cottian Alps faithful unto death ; it has witnessed the Paulicians protesting in the East. It has seen the outburst of the glorious Reformation, and the revival of vital religion in the midst of us. What a solemn dispensation ! what scenes has it swept over ; what facts has it revealed ; how much of the depths of the human heart has it disclosed on the one side, how much of the mercy of God has it illustrated and unfolded on the

other! Surely whether its end be near or remote is an object of interest to us. It seems to me that its end is near. I am not asserting it dogmatically, as if a vital doctrine in the gospel of Christ; but in a comparison of what the New Testament predicts as the marks of the end, with what the newspaper registers as the facts of the day, there is a coincidence so startling, so striking, the one so dovetailing and fitting in with the other, that I cannot help taking up a newspaper in this very year, and during the last two or three years, with a sort of sense of sacredness with which I never read the newspaper before. I have no sympathy with the romance, I have as little with the novel; but I think the newspaper of the nineteenth century is man unconsciously recording, "It is done." God writes the prophecy; the journalist steps in, and without thinking of the prophecy testifies its complete and magnificent fulfilment. And therefore one can read the newspaper now as a sort of solemn record. I do not merely refer to what the writer says in his article, but to the facts that he collects and chronicles in his columns; and those facts are just Providence translating prophecy into performance. What is all history? Prophecy fulfilled. What is prophecy? History unfulfilled. Hence there is something to the Christian mind



delightful, while there is to the greatest of the world something most humbling, in the thought that God traces long before the outline ; great generals, illustrious emperors, high admirals, all step, the one on his throne, the other on the quarter-deck, the other on the battle-field, thinking to accomplish the results of their own genius, when really, though unintentionally, they are going forward to fill up the outline that God has chalked out for them. The fact is, our greatest men are far less than we think them, or than they think themselves. Even the illustrious Wellington, the greatest, the ablest, and the noblest of our warriors, was not the Sculptor ; he was only the chisel in the Sculptor's hand, executing the Sculptor's great and magnificent designs. Our great statesmen think they are originating policies, accomplishing plans, instituting schemes for the world's happiness and social progress : they are merely stepping in to fill up the plan that God has sketched, and to move on the rails He has laid down. And yet man's responsibility is the same ; he acts freely, without a fetter, and without compulsion ; his responsibility for his acts is unimpaired ; and still his agency and his subservience to the great Ruler of heaven and earth are no less obvious and unquestionable.

The close of this age is to be characterized by

times of refreshment from the presence of the Lord. In Titus ii. 13, we are "Looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, our great God and Saviour." When He comes,—the great object of the hope of all believers,—"He will come in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory, taking vengeance on them that know not God." Angels will accompany Him; saints shining in His glory will be with Him. He will come not softly and slowly like the light, as He came before; so softly that the tenderest and most fragile blossom shall not be injured by it; but with the speed and the splendour of the lightning flash, startling by its rapidity, and awing by its glory; and a voice shall be heard that will pierce the realms of the dead, and reverberate through the houses of the living, and it shall be known and heard, and seen and felt, that the Lord of glory is come to claim His own, and to make all things new. Every eye shall see Him; they that pierced Him shall mourn; He shall come to judge the earth, to destroy death, and to open every grave. In the prospect of all this as unveiled in the Bible, the Christian, instead of being alarmed, is described as feeling the very opposite. The attitude of Christians is, they "look for Him," not deprecate His advent; they "wait for Him;" they

are looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus. Nay, they are impatient, for they pray, "Come quickly." The promise is again that they "shall be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is;" "they shall appear with Him in glory;" they shall reign with Him for ever and for ever. Is the hope of the nearness of his home pain to the exile? Is the prospect of the nearness of his estate a grief to the heir of that estate? Is the certainty of laurels and of victory a grief or joy to the soldier? Is a calm, sweet haven sparkling in the sunshine of his native land deprecated by the storm-tossed mariner? And shall our home, our Father's house, the city that hath foundations, the better land, the rest that remaineth for the people of God, shall all this be deprecated; shall its nearness be deplored? The marvel is that Christians do not pray, "Come, Lord Jesus;" that they do not impatiently pray, "Yea, come quickly."

I am aware of an objection that will be urged at the very outset. It is said, "This coming of Christ, referred to often in the New Testament, is not a personal coming; it is a spiritual coming; it is a figurative occurrence; and it is already past, or it is only an increase of a spiritual presence." I answer, if we were to deal with man's writings as some deal with God's book, we should be

astonished at the extravagant results in which such a mode of interpretation would land us. When I hear some urge that this presence of Christ is a spiritual presence, I ask them what is meant by "Come"? What is meant by "Come to them that look for Him"? What is intended by saying His advent is in the future, "He *will* come"? Now, where two or three are met in Christ's name He is there present in the midst of them. Spiritually Christ is now present. What we have we do not hope for; and if He be in the midst of two or three who are now met in His name, then such presence is a proper element of prayer, but not a ground of hope that stretches into the future. It is argued by others that Christ's coming is a merely providential coming, and that He will come in His providential government to reign and rule for ever. I answer again, Christ has not to come into the world in His providence;—He is in it now, He is controlling, governing, overruling, arranging, watching all. He is in the fields in the Crimea, He is on the Black Sea, His eye is upon every missile that is now thundering on the roofs of the houses in Sebastopol; He has attached its billet to every bullet. There is no chance in the field of battle, there is no accident upon the quarter-deck; this world is not given up to a blind

god called Chance as its governor ; Christ is in it, its ruler ordering all, till when each event occurs it was as right that it should occur as that Christ should die upon the cross for me. If then Christ be in His providential government now present, we cannot interpret His future advent as being fulfilled by this fact.

But others say Christ comes at our death, and therefore that it is all the same to us. I answer, first, if death be the same to us as Christ's personal advent, how does it happen that God never regards one as equivalent to the other? Show me one text where He makes our death a constraining motive, and I will show you fifty in which He makes Christ's personal advent to be the great constraining motive. The reason is perhaps this, that the Christian might be selfish in wishing for his own death, because it results in his own individual enjoyment ; but in a Christian praying for the advent of our Blessed Lord, there is breathed a catholic wish involving the happiness of catholic Christendom ; and therefore we pray, not "*My* Father," but "*our* Father ;" as if wishing that all might share our joy, participate in our hope, and be heirs with us of the kingdom of God and of His Christ. But when it is said Christ's advent means our death, we must see our death is going to Him, not His coming to us. At death

I am taken to Him ; but at the second advent He comes to me. And besides, when Christ comes to a dying saint upon his death-bed, does He come with those accompaniments which are declared in this blessed book to be the evidences of His personal approach? Does He come to a death-bed like the lightning in its speed and splendour? Does He come visible with thousands of His saints, with the sound of a trumpet, and with irresistible impressions of His presence? Does He come with angels with Him? It is absurd to construe those texts that predict the coming of the Lord as in any sense or shape fulfilled when a believer is gathered like fruit ripe for transference to heaven, and is taken to Christ, where his soul waits with Him to return to this earth again. "Those that sleep in Christ will He bring with Him." What an interesting thought, that that beloved One, whose image is now stored in your memory as in a precious picture-gallery, has left the world only for a little—that the soul will come back again with Christ; that on the very spot where that soul laid aside its garments of corruption called the body, it will put on what are no longer the garments of the tomb, but robes of immortality; for this mortal will then put on immortality, and this corruptible incorruption. And there is not a feature in the

face, not a peculiarity in the expression, not a long hidden and latent feeling that identified the individual to you, that shall not come up from the grave in sharper, more beautiful relief; and you shall know and be known even as you are now known; and this will be another accompaniment of our Blessed Lord's advent; for "them that sleep in Jesus will Christ bring with Him."

What a solemn thought that one day,—how soon I cannot assert, but if it should be soon, why should it be sorrowful?—"the Lord will descend with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God," and "the dead in Christ shall rise first." What a precious thought is here! that poor, frail body which sleeps beneath the green sod, that frail tenement that has been the spoil of the sabre, or the shot, or the shell, and is buried in the battle-field, or sunk deep in that grave of nations, the unsounded sea; that dead dust that has been wafted by the winds of heaven to every part of the earth, that has been incorporated with the very grass of the field, or that may be in monuments of bronze, or in marble mausolea, or in village church-yards, shall emerge again; atom shall come to atom, particle to particle, and not one shall be missing when the Great Creator and Governor of all gives the command. For, what is said of the bodies of saints? they sleep in

Christ. And in a Catechism that none would be worse for learning, called the Scotch Shorter Catechism, it is said that the bodies of believers rest in their graves united to Christ. What a beautiful thought,—united to Christ till the resurrection! That dead dust is as united to my living Lord as is that living soul that now trusts, and hopes, and expects to be with Him for ever and ever. Not only shall the bodies of the dead be raised, but the living, it is also said, shall be changed. What a thought is here, that those Christians, who shall be alive when Christ comes, shall be changed! You have the whole history of this in 1 Thessalonians iv., at the close of the chapter. Now it is possible—but do not misunderstand my words, and say I dogmatically assert what I only state as possible, and not improbable;—that there may be some actually sitting within these walls or reading this page that shall never die; at all events, if not some of us, there will be Christians living when Christ comes, who shall never die at all. For what does the apostle say? “The dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.” And in 1 Corinthians xv. the apostle says, “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.” The barrister will be pleading for his client, the judge will



be speaking from the bench, the physician will be by the bed-side, the minister in the pulpit, the hearer in the pew ; and in an instant, at that royal sound, this very mortal shall become instinct with immortality, this very corruptible shall be charged with incorruptibility, and death shall be visibly and literally swallowed up in glorious and blessed victory. Now, whether we die in Christ or whether we live in Christ, living or dying in Him our hope is a bright one.

When Christ comes, this world, this earth, the round ball that we tread on, is not to be destroyed. I have often felt so vexed on hearing some people speak of the earth as a thing to be cast out like a weed and to be burned out, or to be handed over to Satan as one of his spoils and trophies for ever and ever. Why should it be? Is there any common sense, apart from Scripture, in concluding that it must be so? Is there anything in matter essentially corrupt, irrecoverably polluted? Look above you at those stars, solid, material orbs, each vaster and more magnificent than our own ; but yet, because material, they are not therefore morally polluted and corrupt. And so this orb of ours is not a hopeless wreck ; if there were no prediction of its recovery, I should almost anticipate its recovery. But Scripture tells us expressly that the last day, the day

of the Lord, will come, when the heavens and earth shall be on fire, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat. But what does he add? "Nevertheless we, according to his promise," (in Isaiah,) "look for," not *another* heaven, but "a new heaven;" not *another* earth, but a "new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Just as there will be at the resurrection not another body, but a new body, so there will pass upon this very orb a change analogous to that which will pass upon us; it shall have its resurrection just as my body shall experience its. And why should it be destroyed? It is still an exquisitely beautiful orb. In the very tints of the petal of a flower there is wisdom and beneficence enough to serve you for a day's study; in the least habits of an insect, in the cell of a bee, in the construction of its hive, there is a lavish wisdom that man has not yet exhausted. Look at the floor on which you tread, so exquisitely carpeted with verdure, with fragrance, and with blossom; look at the sky that is above you, where worlds are subservient as lamps and lights to ours; look at the whole economy in which you live, the ocean of air that you breathe, the infinite provisions for your comfort; and why should you want this world destroyed? Go to some of its fairest glens, its loveliest scenes, its brightest panoramas, in that

brightest season of the four—the spring ; and you will be constrained to say, “ Take away sin ; take away corruption ; take away head-aches, heart-aches, envy, malice, uncharitableness, and all the evils that sin has given birth to ; and I could wish no lovelier heaven to dwell in for ever and for ever.” The whole thing that is wrong is that primal infection at Paradise when Eve and Adam sinned ; and the moment that infection is removed, that fevering element is expunged, this earth will be restored ; a stray and fallen sister now, but reclaimed, redeemed, reconstructed, and replaced then in the sisterhood of orbs, and worlds, and stars, the brightest, the fairest, the noblest, the most interesting of them all, as the specimen world of how deep sin can plunge, how high Christ’s atonement can raise us.

When this age is come to its close, the age of suffering will be done ; the age of faith will be done, for it is fruition ; the age of hope will be done, for it is having. There will be no more sacraments, for the substance is come ; no more a teaching ministry, for they shall be all taught directly from God ; and the various folds that constitute the one flock shall then be absorbed into one universal flock. The elect shall be gathered from the four winds of heaven ; the glass through which we now see darkly, shall be broken,

and we shall see face to face; the veil shall be removed; the sons of God shall be manifested; and the Church will then appear bright like the sun, and fair like the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. And, in the beautiful phraseology of the Apocalypse, the New Jerusalem, that is, the company of Christ's people, shall come down from heaven like a bride adorned for the bridegroom. Oh! instead of deprecating the end; instead of being startled, frightened, alarmed at it; if you be believers,—and it is as such that I address you, it is to Christians that I speak on prophetic subjects;—if you be believers you have only cause to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

In the words of an old Scottish poet, one wonders that we do not oftener say, and sing if we can,

“Jerusalem, my happy home,  
When shall I come to thee?  
When shall my sorrows have an end,  
Thy joys when shall I see?  
O happy harbour of the saints,  
O sweet and pleasant soil,  
In thee no sorrow may be found,  
No grief, no care, no toil.  
Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
God grant that I may see  
Thy endless joys, and of the same  
Partaker aye may be.

Oh my sweet home, Jerusalem,  
Would God I were in thee!  
Would God my woes were at an end,  
Thy joys that I might see!

Thy saints are crowned in glory great,  
They see God face to face,  
They triumph still, and still rejoice,  
Most happy is their case.

Jerusalem, my happy home,  
Would God I were in thee!  
Would God my woes were at an end,  
Thy joys that I might see!"

## II.

### MATERIAL SIGNS OF THE END.

“The harvest is the end of the world.”—MATT. XIII. 39.

THE word “world” in this passage is employed in two distinct and different senses. In the immediately preceding verse, the 38th, the words are, “The field is the world.” The Greek word there is *κοσμος*, *cosmos*, which means the intelligent, rational, responsible world. But in verse 39, the word is not *cosmos*, but a totally different word, *αιων*, which means an age, or a dispensation, or era of the development of God’s plan in the midst of that *cosmos* or world of rational beings to which we have already referred. The recipients of the seed of Divine truth are intelligent, responsible men; the era in which they play a part is called the age, the world, or the dispensation; and the harvest arrives when the seeds sown in innumerable hearts have grown up and borne their natural and legitimate fruits, and are gathered. This is the end of the age, when the good shall be severed from the evil;

the one shall be gathered into everlasting joy, the other cast out into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

We have had several successive worlds with their successive ends since man fell. The Flood was the end of a world, that is, an age; the Exodus from Egypt was the end of another world or age; the Advent of Christ was the end of a third and the commencement of the present. As every previous age has had its end, the present age, even the most sceptical will allow, is destined to have its end and its final issue also. In our last we met the inquiry, Has God given us any reason to believe that unfulfilled predictions of the end are legitimate subjects of our prayerful, impartial, and patient study? Prophecy is written not for the conviction of them who shall witness its final accomplishment, for at the end of the world there will be evidence so irresistible of the will of God and the truth of Christ, that none will need a visible fulfilment of prophecy to prove God's word is true. Prophecy has been written for the investigation of those that live before it is fulfilled; not that they may become prophets, for that we do not pretend to be; but that they may, by comparing written predictions with existing phenomena, form some proximate idea of the remoteness or the nearness

of that closing epoch which winds up the drama of a world, the issues of which project their shadows into everlasting ages. On every eve of every previous age pre-intimations have been given. Noah was told the precise time when the Flood would come ; the reason why, and the results of it. Abraham was told the date of the captivity in Egypt ; Moses understood the expiring of that epoch ; and instantly rose the self-same day at the end of the 430 years revealed to Abraham, and began his exodus with the bones of the last of the patriarchs toward the rest that was promised to the people of God. In short, no grand epoch has occurred in the world of which God has not given some specific, clear, unmis-takeable premonitory signs. Moses acted on his knowledge. At the close of the Levitical economy, Anna and Simeon, and other private as well as inspired persons, that waited for the consolation of Israel, understood that Daniel's years were expired, that the time of the advent of the promised Messiah had come : and so extensive was the anticipation of the Saviour 1855 years ago, that the very echoes of their often-uttered expectations spread throughout the length and breadth of heathendom ; and Gentile writers, as we have already noticed, have recorded in the pages of their able and accomplished works, that about that time



a Great Deliverer was expected by the Jews, in whose hands should be the sceptre of the world that was to be. Thus we find at the twilight that ushered in the close of every age the expectancy of its arrival at that very time. If God gave forelights of the cross, has He given none of the crown? If He helped His people to see so clearly Him that was about to suffer, has He left us in total darkness about the distance, or the nearness, or the nature of the approach of Him who comes, crowned with many crowns, to sway a sceptre that shall never cease, and to exercise a dominion wide as the wide world? We might go over the Apocalypse, and see that the predictions of each future event during the last 1500 years have been given there exceedingly clear and sharply defined. For instance, the destruction of Paganism and the ascendancy of Christianity under Constantine is not dimly indicated in the 6th chapter of the Apocalypse. The corruption and superstition of the visible Church is intimated where the sealing takes place of God's faithful ones in the 7th chapter. The Saracenic invasion, the last living remains of which are expiring at this moment in Eastern Christendom, was from 612 to 762; a period of five prophetic months, or 150 literal years; the precise epoch assigned in the Apocalypse to its

duration. The beginning of the Turkish woe, or the overflowing of the Euphrates, in 1065, which continued till 1453, when Constantinople fell, and the mistress of the East became the supreme seat of the Moslem and the site of the chief Mosque, is set forth. We have in the Revelations the rise of Luther, the outburst of the glorious Reformation, as it is symbolically but faithfully given in the 10th chapter. We trace next the bright line of Protestant witnesses, continued from the apostles onward to Augustine, from Augustine down to Agobard and Luther, in the West and in the East by the struggling but faithful Paulicians ; and in these the true succession of faithful martyrs, ministers, and saints, in contrast to the great visible and predicted Apostasy, through which so many so fatally and so absurdly attempt to find out and trace the links of the succession of the Christian ministry. The true Church in the middle ages was not that whose ministers were mitred, whose worshippers were crowned, whose churches were cathedrals, whose service was marked by all the outward splendour and sensuous impression of a gorgeous ceremonial. The true Church was detected in the thin silver thread of faithful ones beginning in the days of Christ, sometimes hid, sometimes apparent, never utterly broken or destroyed, which again appeared

in Martin Luther and the Reformers, or witnesses of Germany ; and spread across the ocean into this great land of ours, which bears in its bosom the prophecy of a triumph, and the certainty of trophies, unprecedented for their magnitude and number in the past ages of the world.

In all these, to which I cannot more particularly refer, we find sea-marks and land-marks, stars in the sky and phenomena in the earth, that lead us, with God's book in our hands and man's history before us, to behold in the pages of Gibbon, in the eloquent writings of Macaulay, in the philosophical and beautiful reflections of Alison, the ablest and the best commentators on the word of prophecy ; so that he that compares what the Spirit has predicted in the Bible with what Providence has performed in the world, as recorded in the page of the historian, will be constrained to say, that we have irresistible proof of a God ever acting out in the world what He has written and inspired in the Bible. In the facts of history are heard the echoes of the texts of inspired prophecy.

Let us now touch the confines of a period that relates more immediately to ourselves, and try if we can ascertain what place and time we now occupy, and whether there are and what are the signs of the end—" the winding or the finishing


up together," *συντελεια*, of the present age ; what are the proximate indications of the ending and exhaustion of the dispensation or age in which we now act à solemn part. That there are signs is plain from what the Lord has told us ; signs not so clear that one dare specify the exact date of our day, or the distance and duration of the remaining years ; but so striking in the page of prophecy, and so startling in the course of fulfilment, that we are able—shall I say to guess—or rather to conclude that the deepening twilight of this dispensation has now begun ; a twilight however, blessed be God ! that, like the evening twilights of our Scottish land, will so melt into the morning twilight of an eternal day that scarcely a night will be felt between. The subject of this Lecture is, " The physical or material signs of the end of the age." Are such signs given in the Bible ? They are. I open the Gospel of St. Matthew, at the 24th chapter, and I find a prediction and description of signs far exceeding anything that preceded the fall of Jerusalem. In Matt. xxiv. 24—" There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders ; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." At the 27th verse it is written, " For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall

also the coming of the Son of man be. For whosoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken : and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven : and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” The next passage is in Luke xxi. 24, where He speaks of the Jews. “They,” the Jews, “shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations ; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles”—the well known prophetic time, times, and half a time—“shall be fulfilled. And there shall be,” at the fulfilling of these times of the Gentiles, “signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars ; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity ; the sea and the waves roaring ; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth ; for the powers of hea-

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ven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads ; for your redemption draweth nigh." And in another part, "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom : and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights." Luke xxi. 10, 11. These are some of the material or physical phenomena that shall precede the end of the age, the advent of the Son of man. The first statement I cannot but notice, as of special importance, is, "There shall come false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show such signs and wonders, that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." What does this remarkable prophecy teach us? Much that is good as well as perilous. First, there is an elect or a Christian people proof against the deceptions and the fascinations of Satan in all his aspects ; secondly, that efforts will be made with the greatest skill, on the widest stage, and in the most impressive manner, to deceive, delude, and ensnare the people of God. I am one of those who think, not unreasonably or without authority from Scripture, that before the great Western Apostasy, now trembling upon the very edge of its irretrievable ruin, shall pass


away from the earth as a thing of wickedness that was, she and her emissaries will do what I may call justly supernatural works. I cannot believe that all the miracles of Rome in mediæval days were unmixed mockeries and anile fables. Nor do I see why, if Satan has the awful power to touch my mind without consulting my will, and to inject into that mind unholy thoughts without my permission, he may not have the power of doing deeds that the senses shall attest as altogether above the level of the natural. But you say, are not miracles the great proof of the inspiration of the Bible ; and if a priest or Dr. Wiseman were to do a miracle, would not that be evidence that his doctrines are right ? Suppose that subtle controversialist, that devoted priest of his Church, were to stand upon one of the graves of the dead, and were by his bidding to stir the cold ashes in their silent urn, and to bring forth the dead man and show him among the ranks of the living, again taking his place in the arrangements of social life ; the first question I would ask as a spectator of the admitted supernatural act would be, " Dr. Wiseman, what do you mean to prove by this miracle ? " In the Bible I find that every miracle our Saviour wrought was not a splendid fire-work, a vivid display of supernatural force, but omnipotent power, stretching down from the



heavens to hold up a definite light, or doctrine, or truth. Every miracle in the New Testament was wrought not to show that God was mighty, but to show that a certain truth was from God. Acting on these principles I ask this miracle-worker, "What is your object?" He says, "To prove that the Virgin Mary is immaculate, and that she ought to be worshipped as we worship her in the Church of Rome." What should, and I hope would, instantly be my answer? First, I should remember that in the last days they will do signs and wonders so startling that if possible they would deceive the very elect; secondly, I should remember that Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; and thirdly, I should remember that the coming of the Antichristian head is with all lying wonders,—not false wonders; if you look at your Greek Testaments, you will find it is *τεραςι ψευδους*, miracles that prove a lie, not miracles that are false. I should remember, lastly, "If we or an angel from heaven preach to you any other gospel than that which is here, let him be anathema." I would then turn round and say to this eloquent advocate of the worship of the Virgin Mary, who has wrought a miracle to prove it to me, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."



But the signs and symptoms of the days approaching the end are not chiefly such as these. They are also physical, material, and palpable; "wars, rumours of wars; distress of nations, perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear; earthquakes in divers places." Let us specially investigate one of these last quoted, as one of the signs preceding the end of the age—"earthquakes in divers places." I proceed to quote some evidences of the fulfilment of this. In doing so I anticipate what will instantly occur to many minds. You will say, "All the earthquakes that you can quote as having happened this year or last year would not prove that we are near the end of the age; for there have always been earthquakes." Most certainly there always have been earthquakes; but our Blessed Lord knew that when He gave this as a sign of His advent; He knew there had been earthquakes always; He knew there would be earthquakes in the middle ages; and yet He who never spoke a rash word, or a wrong prophecy, or an unweighed reflection, said that one of the signs of the near approach of His glory will be earthquakes in divers places. On your principle and mode of reasoning, there can be no physical sign of the nearness of the end, because similar signs have been from the beginning. Nevertheless I ask



you to refer with me to what I think is the most admirable commentary upon prophecy, modern history. If I want to see prophecy rushing into performance; if I want to see the evidence of God inscribing upon the world's tablets what He has written upon the Bible's page, I take up one of the morning or daily newspapers, and I read there what is now going on,—the fulfilment of prophecy. A newspaper in modern times has assumed a grandeur—a moral grandeur, and literary importance, that makes it altogether a different document from the miserable pages that used to appear under that name, and still more from the meagre mimicries of a newspaper still issued on the Continent of Europe. If we take up any one of our respectable morning papers, and read the record of what is going on in that startling East, where the lightning seems, according to prophecy, to leap from its lair, and to shine with increasing splendour onward to the west, we shall see unfolding evidences of prophecies fulfilled every day—phenomena so remarkable, and so singular, that the writers in the "Times" newspaper record them at this moment, as if they saw proofs of something in the material world corresponding to the terrible convulsions that are shaking the moral world. Earthquakes in divers places is stated a sign of the end. The

first extract that I give is from a morning paper, the Daily News, in which these words occur in a letter from Nice, dated Dec. 30th, 1854.

“The morning before last, about three o’clock, the inhabitants of this place were awakened from their sleep by a singular sensation of horizontal movement. At first, the greatest number thought it must be a dream, but they soon perceived that it was a terrible reality. Each house rocked gently on its foundations, as you may have seen young poplar trees swaying to and fro from a strong breeze. In an instant the whole town was on the alert. Every one rushed out, avoiding the streets, and seeking the gardens and fields, where many erected marquees to shelter themselves from the night air. The weather was delightful; the sky studded with countless stars, and everything above presenting a marked contrast with the confusion and disquietude of the population. Soon after, a second shock, and then a third, increased the general terror to the utmost point. Chimneys had been thrown to the ground—a long line of wall had fallen with a loud crash—no one knew but that the town was about to be swallowed up, and the sea to close over the ancient Nicæa of the Romans. The whole scene was horrible, but yet so strange that it had something of the charm of dreams, or of the supernatural. What added to the uneasiness was, that some Sicilians, who pretended to be learned in earthquake proceedings, announced that another shock was to be expected within twenty-four hours. In consequence, no one went to bed, and nearly all Nice

spent the next night in bivouac. All the public vehicles of the town were hired, and carried off to the country, to serve as shelter for as many persons as could be stowed into them, and many a tent was erected in the plain for the same purpose. However, everything passed over in quiet."

"Two severe shocks of earthquake were experienced at Turin, at about 3 A. M. on the 29th ult. They were undulatory, in the direction N. E. to S. W., and preceded and accompanied by a rumbling noise and violent wind. The shocks succeeded close upon each other, and lasted several seconds each. It appears that they were felt much more severely in the environs of Turin than in the city itself, since in the former they caused such terror among the inhabitants that they ran out of their dwellings, which was not generally the case in Turin."

Another correspondent writes—

"You will have heard by the newspapers the severe shocks of an earthquake we have had—four in all. I am thankful to say they did no harm to the house we were in, or indeed any great deal of damage in the town, but the fright of the inhabitants was dreadful, expecting every moment their houses falling in and crushing them. They rushed out half frantic in their night dresses, or anything they could find to cover themselves. One man, his wife, and child, got to the Hotel des Etrangers with only a slight covering, and more dead than alive with terror; their room ceiling had fallen down. I was awake by hearing the jug and basin rattle, my bed shaking under me, and a noise like the door loudly banging to. Michael said

'he was awoke with the house shaking much, and the bells ringing.'

"The Place Victor, the Boulevards, and the sea-shore were crowded with people, numbers with only their night clothes or a blanket to cover them. The following night but few persons went to bed, some slept in their carriages, and the Place, &c., was again crowded, as it is when they have fire-works. Many people are ill from fright and cold. At Ventimillo they say the mountain has opened, that fire issued out, and that it is now impassable. The other day the air was so hot we could hardly bear it; from the mountains, too, that were covered with snow. There was another slight trembling felt at Nice yesterday morning.

"It is also stated here that much damage has been done at Rome, and that St. Peter's has been greatly injured. It is ascribed by many to a tremendous eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which has just broken out."

Italy begins to heave with subterranean forces, moral and physical. Rome is doomed to disappear in a terrible convulsion. This is her end in prophecy. Does it not look as if the first vibrations, premonitory of the final shock, had been felt at Nice, Genoa, and in the northern parts of Italy, especially viewed in connexion with the dates already stated. And if this of itself proves nothing, and I do not quote it as if this one fact were a proof of the end of the age, may it not,

**taken in combination with others, go far to suggest that we may be approaching that very period of which these are some of the solemn and expressive signs? I read again in a letter from Constantinople to the "Times," dated March, 1855.**

**"The accounts from Broussa are terrible. Such a long-continued convulsion of nature has hardly been heard of in the history of the world. The earthquake had lasted five days, and shocks were of constant occurrence when the last news left. By my last letter you learned that the great shock of the 28th of February had destroyed a part of the town, and killed or maimed nearly three hundred of the inhabitants. Although the shocks were only felt at Constantinople during two days, they lasted at Broussa for four succeeding days, not without causing serious damage to the already shaken houses. The commencement of the convulsion was preceded by torrents of rain, which lasted more than twenty-four hours, accompanied by a high wind and occasional thunder. At three o'clock the sky became suddenly overcast; a strong smell of sulphur was perceived, and the first shock took place, which, in less than a minute, overthrew mosques, houses, and bazaars, in one vast ruin. Nearly eighty mosques have been so much injured that their speedy fall is expected, while not one in the whole city has escaped some damage. The khans, or large buildings which served either as inns or places for transacting business, are mostly injured, and five**

of them were completely destroyed, crushing scores of their unfortunate inmates. The bazaars, with their heavy arches, are flat on the ground. The ancient mosque of Davoullon-Monastir, a Greek ecclesiastical edifice, said to be 1200 years old, is unhappily destroyed. Another mosque, the Oulon-Djami, a fine building 600 years old, is also a mass of ruins. It was the chief ornament of the city, and the most splendid religious edifice of the days when Broussa was the capital of the young and growing Ottoman empire. Materialists may, however, still more regret the great destruction which has fallen on the silk factories, of which scarcely one has escaped without damage, while the number of women who have lost their lives by the fall has been very large.

“Large masses of rock were detached from their beds, and came crashing down the sides of Olympus into the neighbourhood of the town. In one place several houses were crushed by one of these avalanches. The old wall and fort were shaken to the ground, and in their fall buried ten or twelve houses, and the factory of Hadji Anastasi, a respectable Greek manufacturer, who also lost his life. As the shocks continued during the night, the whole population at once quitted the town, and are now encamped in the neighbourhood—the well-off in tents, the poor under the open heaven, preferring to bear the chill nights of March than to live in hourly dread of destruction within the circuit of their ill-fated city. The shocks which have since taken place have thrown down many buildings which were previously injured, but there is no reason to believe that any fresh

edifices have been destroyed. A shock on the second of March was very severe; and when the post left on the night of the fourth there had been another of considerable violence. As was anticipated, the ravages of the earthquake have not extended over any very great tract of country. There is no news that Kutahia or Angora have suffered, although the direction of the oscillations (from east to west) would give reason to suppose that the latter city might have experienced as great calamities as Broussa itself."

And again, says the same writer in another communication, "As if nature,"—now here is an unconscious witness to the coincidence between God's work and God's word;—

"As if nature herself were influenced by the causes which now disturb mankind, this capital has been visited within a short time by two of the most violent commotions that have been known for many years. Three months since the hurricane which destroyed the British transports burst over the Black Sea with a fury not to be surpassed by the tornadoes of the Mexican Gulf; and yesterday Constantinople was shaken by an earthquake, which, had it lasted long, might have been reckoned among the calamities of the human race."

This is the writing of one who has no desire to compare prophecy with performance. He goes on to say,

"The consternation caused is extreme. At five



minutes past three in the afternoon the shock was felt, and it lasted, as nearly as can be computed, about half a minute. The motion was not the slow wavelike movement which marks the earthquakes that extend over whole continents, but a sharp, rapid trembling, which caused every pane of glass, and every tile on the housetop, to rattle; it is possible, therefore, that the disturbance may have been merely local. But the violence of the movement was far beyond that which is generally felt in the earthquakes of the Ionian Islands, and the coast of Asia Minor, and the chief fear that it inspired was that it might only be the prelude to a more severe visitation. Happily, although it was succeeded by a number of other shocks, each of the following movements diminished in violence, and the only harm done was caused by the first. Many persons were only aware of a single disturbance, but between 3 and 5 o'clock no less than six shocks were counted; two took place between 7 and 8 o'clock in the evening, and the last that I felt was at a few minutes before midnight. With the exception of the shock at ten minutes past 7 o'clock, all these were slight, and might not have been remarked, but for the apprehensions that had been roused by the occurrence in the afternoon. The consternation caused by the great shock was extreme. The lower animals seem to have had some feeling of what was about to happen for several seconds before it was felt by human beings. Whether the vibration made itself known to them before it was perceived by man, or whether what is called instinct gave them a peculiar warning, it is certain that horses, both in the

streets and stables, stood still and trembling for some time before the shock was felt; for some minutes after they were in great terror, and in certain cases they were also aware of the minor shocks which escaped the notice of human creatures. The motion was chiefly felt in the upper rooms of houses. Pera is situated on a hill, and the higher stories of some of its lofty buildings are at no small elevation above the level of the sea. In these rooms glasses were thrown off the tables, and persons who were standing were obliged to sit down or to cling for support to some fixed object. The motion is described by one who happened to have mounted to the top of Galata Tower as that of a ship in a gale. No report has reached me of any serious destruction of property or loss of life, but the buildings which have been injured are not a few. The British Embassy is one of the most solid edifices in the country; but being constructed at the summit of the Pera hill, it was exposed to the full violence of the shock. A stack of its massive chimneys was thrown down, and the large square stones of which the walls are constructed are said to have been displaced in certain parts. Every bell in the palace rang violently, and even in one or two churches the still larger masses of metal resounded dismally. A number of minarets in Stamboul and Pera have been thrown down—whether with any loss of life I have not learnt. The large iron chimney of the building where the French bread is baked was broken short off by the shock. The bazaars are said to have been cracked in several places. If this be correct, it will convey to all who have visited them an

idea of the violence of the motion. The long low-arched passages, constructed of heavy stones, and, even in the height of summer, shutting out the heat and glare, and forming cool, shady tunnels, which invite the weary passer-by to enter, would seem to be the last kind of construction liable to be shaken by subterranean violence. Yet these are declared to be split in many parts and to require repair. Some of the large stone houses of Pera are also injured. One is in a dangerous state, another has a crack from top to bottom, and yesterday attracted a crowd of gazers. Of the smaller houses one or two are in a very unsafe state. The wooden edifices have received no injury."

Another correspondent writes in the "Times" immediately after the last date:—

"There is no mistake this time about the destruction of Broussa. The shock which took place on the evening of the 11th has levelled to the ground the greater part of the ancient city, and destroyed some of the finest monuments of Roman, Byzantine, and Mussulman art which this country could boast of. Since the first shock, on the 28th of February, the population had taken precautions in case of a recurrence of the calamity, and it is to these that the small number of casualties is due. Every one who had an open space before his house pitched a tent, where the family passed most of their time, and very often remained during the night. The upper stories of the houses were abandoned, and the household lived in the hall with open doors, so as to be ready for immediate flight whenever the subterranean roar of

the earthquake should make itself heard, and the trembling of the furniture denote the approaching destruction. The previous warning, and the fact that the fall of buildings does not take place until towards the end, and sometimes not till after the cessation of the vibration, is the reason that out of a population of 70,000 souls not more than 100 have been killed or wounded by a catastrophe which has made half of them houseless and destitute. On the 16th the full extent of the calamity was known at Constantinople. The great shock of the 11th was only the first of a series almost innumerable. At least forty vibrations were felt during the first night, and not a day has passed since without three or four of more or less severity. Many of these have been attended with the fall of edifices which had been previously shaken, and the chief danger now to be apprehended is that the shattered walls which line the narrow streets will occasionally be thrown down on the inhabitants, even without a recurrence of the motion. The unhappy population is flying in all directions from the doomed city. On the 17th, the Porte, at the request of Lord Stratford, sent a steamer to Guemlik to bring away the fugitives who were thronging the little port without food or the means of transport. Mr. Whittall, a merchant of this place, also determined to go with a steamer belonging to him and bring to Constantinople as many as it would hold. Availing myself of this opportunity, I started for Guemlik the day before yesterday, to judge for myself of the extent of the calamity. In the village we found all the inhabitants of Broussa who had been able to

find means of transport to the sea-coast. Among them was John Zohrab, commonly called Tchelebi John, a well-known personage in those parts, and acquainted with everybody in the province, from Pashas to banditti. He had ridden in from the interior the day before, having had his farm-house crushed flat to the ground; but as a ride of 40 miles through the mud is not much for him, he offered to go back with us to Broussa and bring us back before sunset. Having with some difficulty found horses, we started, and on arriving at the summit of the line of hills which overlooks the glorious plain of Broussa we could judge of the force of the convulsion. From that point there was not a bridge, a wall, or a house which had not more or less suffered. The road was thronged with fugitives—veiled Turkish women, carrying with them all their goods on the back of a miserable horse, to obtain which they had probably parted with a number of necessaries. The very poor, mostly Armenians and Jews, were on foot bending under the weight of counterpanes and kettles, and dragging after them their weeping and foot-sore children, who would be a couple of days in making the weary journey of 20 miles through the bush and quagmire before they arrived at Guemlik. The most fortunate were the peasantry, who lived at a distance from narrow lanes and crumbling mosques. Most of these had their cottages destroyed, but they had quietly erected rude tents among the mulberry trees, and were living as happily as if nothing had occurred. The lower classes in every country soon forget calamities, for they have been accustomed to so little

material comfort that nothing can make a change for the worse in their condition. On approaching the city the results of the convulsion were visible on every side. The village of Tchefiplik was in ruins, the houses seeming as if they had been crushed in by the fall of some enormous weight on their roofs. At last Broussa was plainly visible, its snowy mosques and dark red houses standing out against the green sides of Olympus, which towered up above with its crown of snow. Perhaps no more romantic spot can be found in the world than this, which has been the site of an imperial city for more than 2000 years. The rapid torrent which passes through the midst of the city and across its plain is crossed by massive stone bridges, two of which date from Roman times. The most solid of these structures, a work of the early Cæsars, is now shattered and impassable. Huge masses of masonry have been hurled down into the stream beneath, and the solid arch is cleft in two. The greatest antiquarian loss which the place has suffered is, however, in the demolition of the great mosque, formerly the Convent of the Virgin, an edifice erected shortly after the age of Justinian, and second to St. Sophia alone for vastness and beauty. The lofty dome is crushed; the mosaic work, fresh and beautiful as if not 10 years old, is scattered over the pavement; the minarets—of course a Mussulman addition—are broken short off at a third of their height from the ground; and the structure, which lately was filled with worshippers, is now deserted by all but the Turkish guard, which is placed at the gate to prevent the depredations which often follow a general

calamity. The tomb of Sultan Orchan, son of Othman, is also crushed. The monarch who made Broussa the capital of his warlike state, and who has rested peacefully in the grave for 500 years, now lies under the ruins of his ancient city. Whole quarters of the town are level with the ground, not a house remaining. Amid the ruins miserable women may be seen tending their wounded relations, who lie under the shelter of a bit of carpet fastened to three upright posts, or of a few boards placed slantingly against some tottering wall. The Jews have suffered greatly. The citadel stands on the slope of the hill; beneath and around it cluster the dwellings of this peaceful and suffering race. At the moment of the shock masses of wall were hurled down upon the small tenements below, and even portions of the solid rock came rolling down the mountain-side like avalanches, and crushed everything in their way. The Jews, with their lofty head-dresses, were to be seen sitting amid their fallen walls, destitute and desolate. Not even at such a moment does compassion subdue the dark aversion which separates this unhappy race from the people among whom it lives. Who will care for a Jew? Not a piece of bread or a cup of water will Turk, Greek, or Armenian give to the expiring Hebrew, even at a time when the judgment of Heaven has involved all in a common misfortune! The bounty of a government and the subscriptions of individuals would be equally kept back from the despised race if the allotted funds were administered by pashas or bishops. From the European residents alone have the poor of all classes received help here-

tofore, and now the Europeans, even the consuls, have fled the place. It was reported in Constantinople that the springs had failed, and that want of water was to be added to the other horrors of the place. But the only foundation for this statement is, that the mineral waters, which form the chief attraction of Broussa to the stranger, are much diminished in quantity, and for a few days did not rise to the surface at all. Plenty of good water is to be had, as even the stream which flows through the city is fit to drink. The great want is of food: many of the ovens are destroyed, and bread is in consequence dear. The number of persons thrown out of work by the event is, of course, very large; but, happily, none of the silk factories have been injured, and in a few weeks, should no repetition of the shocks occur, the fugitives will take courage and venture back, work will be resumed, the city will once more rise from its foundations, and nothing but the ruins of a few vast edifices, which the present age cannot restore, will bear witness of the most fearful catastrophe which has befallen an eastern city for many hundred years. We returned to Guemlik by sunset, and found every nook and corner of the vessel crowded with human beings; as many as 470 of all ages and conditions had hurried on board, and they lay packed thick along the deck, and in all the cabins, so that to lie down was almost impossible. The Turkish boat had left full, and a British steamer was ready to start. The fugitives hoped that some of their number might be able to leave in this vessel; but it soon appeared that it had been despatched to bring away 'the



British residents,' who consist of the consul and his family. The answer of the captain to applications was, that no one could be received ; and the steamer, sent down at a cost probably of £60, left with four persons on board—the consul, his two daughters, and a deputy-assistant postmaster from Constantinople, who happened to be at Broussa on a pleasure excursion. We arrived this morning in the Golden Horn, when the unfortunates were allowed to land without going through any quarantine regulations."

In another communication subsequent to that, the same writer says,—

"The earthquake at Broussa was a terrible calamity, but, as usual, exaggerated by report. The telegraphic message which you will have received was despatched from here within an hour after the arrival of the first news, and before there was time to learn any details. Letters have been since received which give a more circumstantial account of the occurrence, although even yet there is much wanting to form a just estimate of the destruction of life and property. At the same moment that the first great shock was felt at Constantinople, the old Asiatic city was shaken to its foundations, and within a few seconds nearly 300 of the inhabitants were buried beneath the ruins of a part of the town. The shock appears to have lasted about three-quarters of a minute. The oscillations came from the south-east, and were of that quick, jerking nature which causes such destruction. The city is partly surrounded by a wall, which dates from the time when the early Ottoman Sultans held their

court there, before Adrianople had been raised to an equality with the old capital. This wall appears to have been far from solid, and unfortunately a large number of the poorer population had fixed their houses against it for the purpose of support and shelter. The wall swayed to and fro for some seconds, as if shaken by the wind; at first only a few stones fell from the top, or were dislodged wherever the old mortar had decayed and fallen out; but at the last great vibration, which preceded the cessation of the shock, a great part of the circuit fell flat, almost in a mass, and several score of houses were at once crushed, with their unfortunate inmates. There was scarcely an edifice in the town which was not more or less injured, but the houses of the wealthier inhabitants suffered comparatively little, and the loss of life has been almost entirely confined to the humbler class. The mosques, as usual, have suffered greatly, and there is said to be hardly a minaret standing in the whole city. Out of 125 mosques there is hardly one left untouched. One particularly, more than five centuries old, and the pride of the inhabitants, has been levelled to the ground. In a silk factory of the neighbourhood a fearful calamity occurred: the whole building fell flat, and 60 women who were at work were buried in the ruins. It is believed that they all perished."

"We cannot be too thankful that this visitation has passed away without inflicting serious loss on the population of the capital. Throughout the whole of the 28th great apprehension prevailed that the shocks would recur with equal force to that of the one which

shook the city at three o'clock. They continued at intervals during the night; one took place at five, and another at seven o'clock, on the morning of the 1st, one in the middle of the day, and another at half-past five in the afternoon. None of these, however, caused any damage, and indeed they were not felt by the majority of the inhabitants. Since the 1st there has been no recurrence of the convulsion.

"In the present temper of men's minds there is a natural tendency to connect physical commotions with the political events which are passing around. It cannot be, therefore, wondered at that among the illiterate population of Constantinople some superstitious awe should prevail, and that each race should interpret the ominous convulsion according to its own prepossessions. The poor (and, with the exception of a few individuals, the Turks are all poor) are tried by scarcity and disease, and weighed down by a feeling of impending calamity. They expect little advantage to themselves or their nation from the struggle which is proceeding. Even the Christians are weary of the contention to which they looked forward as the dawn of a brighter day. Many melancholy predictions have therefore been founded on the late occurrence, which is considered, if not a judgment, at least a warning."

During these scenes we read of an earthquake at Perth :—

"About one or two o'clock on Monday morning, a smart shock of an earthquake was felt here, which lasted two or three seconds. After a brief interval,

a second shock was experienced of the same duration as the first."—*Edinburgh Paper*.

No sooner has this passed away, than in one morning newspaper you will find the account of another shock of an earthquake at Constantinople, the full accounts of which have not yet reached us, but which, from the slight indications given in the paper, seems to have been also disastrous. Now, should we find these multiplying day after day; successive shocks here and there and everywhere; as if nature groaned, in the language of the apostle, "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God;" if you find that our blessed Lord has predicted such occurrences, not universal, but in divers places, as special and specific signs of the approach of the end of the age; shall I be thought superstitious or you sceptic in denying that they are so?

The following is an extract from a private letter from New Zealand:

"On the evening previously to the date of his letter, the 24th of January, whilst he and the family were engaged in prayer at about half-past nine in the evening, they observed the table to rock violently;—they looked at each other aghast, the children screamed, the dogs barked, and they all rushed out of the house amid a shower of bricks from the chimney of the house, which had fallen. Several other shocks were felt during the night."

The following have occurred since the first edition of this work.

*"Sion, Valais, July 27.*

"I send you some fresh details which I have just collected with respect to the catastrophe of St. Nicolas and Viège.

"The 26th has been a yet more terrible day than the 25th,—not that the shocks of earthquake have been stronger, but that all the houses, being cracked and ready to fall, were unable to resist any new shocks. At 10 o'clock I was at Grachen, sitting on a rock, and talking with two peasants, when, all at once, our seat was violently agitated; we were thrown to the earth, and at the same moment 13 barns fell in, the spire of the church was completely demolished, and an enormous rock,—known in the district by the name of "Kalchenzug"—bounding from the top of the mountain, precipitated itself with a horrible crash into Viège, surrounded by a cloud of pebbly dust which rolled onwards with the impetuosity of an avalanche.

"From Grachen I went to St. Nicolas by the wooden bridge. Notwithstanding the reiterated warnings of the inhabitants, I determined to penetrate into the village, in order that I might be able myself to judge of the extent of the disaster.

"All the houses had fallen one upon the other, and at the very moment that I quitted the village, (a quarter past 1, P. M.) a fresh shock occurred, which completely levelled the little inn called 'La Croix Fédérale.' The only houses which now stand at St. Nicolas are the priest's house and the house of the

notary, M. Binner. All the rest is one heap of ruins, and the wretched inhabitants of this village, collected together in a large field near the river, are encamped in the open air. It is heartbreaking to witness the despairing sadness of the men, who have just seen the destruction of the houses which sheltered them yesterday, and of the women, surrounded by their children, who can do nothing but weep over this overwhelming calamity.

“Between a-quarter past 1 o'clock and 5 I have felt six shocks of earthquake at St. Nicolas,—viz. at a-quarter past 1, at 10 minutes past 2, at 14 minutes past 2, at half-past 2, at 40 minutes past 3, and at 40 minutes past 4. At 5 o'clock I resumed the road to Viège by the right bank of the river, in order to avoid the storm of stones which never stopped falling. On the road the shocks continued, but I must admit that I did not care to note them very accurately, being in a hurry to arrive at Stalden.

“On the road I met the curé of St. Nicolas, without a hat, and in great pain. A stone had struck him on the head and another on the knee. He was creeping along with difficulty, but we were obliged to pursue our journey separately, for it was impossible to stop. The road was entirely covered with crevices, crumbled walls, enormous blocks of stone, and at every instant the noise of something cracking was renewed.

“I have at last arrived at Stalden. Nobody is in the village; everybody has fled. Almost all the stone houses have been shaken down. The wooden structures have resisted better.

"At half-past 6 I set out for Viège, but at 200 yards from Stalden the road was impassable. I was obliged to go, as best I could, by the side of the hill.

"With respect to Viège you know what has taken place. Yesterday, at 10 o'clock in the evening, there was a fresh shock as strong as those which preceded it. As at Stalden and St. Nicolas, there are no inhabitants in this little town. They are encamped in the open air.

"At 3 o'clock in the morning I had fortunately returned to Sion from my perilous excursion.

"At Zermatt, Tesch, and Randa there has been no mischief. At Törbel the roof of the church is driven in, as in the two churches of Viège; the same thing has happened at Hurbücken. No news from any other quarter.

"The wounded guide has been brought back to Viège. It is believed that his leg is not broken. I saw at St. Nicolas a woman who was suffering agonies; a beam in falling had broken her arm, and they were on the point of amputating it, but without any hope of saving her.

"Such was the situation yesterday. You see how disastrous it is, and what a depth of compassion must be felt for so many honest people struck down by a calamity hitherto unheard of in these districts."

"THE LATE EARTHQUAKE.—The whole east of France from Valence up to Metz felt very perceptibly the shock of earthquake which, as has been already mentioned, did some slight damage at Lyons on the 25th at noon. At Grenoble three or four dis-

tinct oscillations were felt, which lasted during a period of about 30 seconds. The clock of the cathedral was stopped. At about the same time a strong shock was felt at Lons-le-Saulnier, the oscillations, which followed each other in rapid succession, appearing to be in the direction from east to west. Several of the ceilings of rooms in upper parts of houses were cracked and two chimneys thrown down. Some minutes before the shocks the cattle on several farms in this neighbourhood were heard to make that peculiar lowing which denotes a fear of approaching danger. The shock at Besançon also lasted for about 30 seconds. The furniture in some rooms was displaced, the bells set ringing, and some ceilings cracked. There was no particular atmospheric sign to announce the phenomenon. The weather was wet and stormy, and the barometer above 'variable.' At Baume, in the Doubs, the shock was violent, several chimneys being partly thrown down and others damaged. At Belvoir, in the same department, the shock, which lasted six seconds, was so violent that the houses were felt to rock. Several chimneys were thrown down here, and many walls were much cracked. The movement was accompanied by a rumbling noise and by a strong smell of sulphur. At Strasbourg the shock was felt in the midst of a violent storm and heavy rain. The clock in the house of the keeper of the cathedral, and situate on the platform of the building, was stopped. The water in the reservoirs was so agitated as to flow over the edges of the basins. The shock lasted nearly a minute. In the upper part of one of the



barracks the soldiers ran out in great haste, imagining the house was about to fall. At Dijon the shock, which was rather slight, was felt in the direction of north-east to south-west. The accounts received from Italy, Switzerland, and part of Germany agree in stating that the shock extended to all those countries. The time indicated varies from 10 to 20 minutes past 1, but the variation is probably only caused by difference of clocks. Among other places where the shocks were felt were Erbach, in the Odenwald, Carlsruhe, Friburg, the Baden Oberland, Stuttgart, Ravensburg, Esslingen, Plochingen, &c. In most of the places two or three oscillations were felt; they went from the north-east to the south-west, and were strong enough to shake the windows, ring bells, and displace light articles of furniture, but the barometer and thermometer underwent no variation. The sky was cloudy at the time, and the wind blew from the south-west. A letter from Milan of the 25th says:—"A severe shock of earthquake was felt at Milan this day, in the direction of east to west. It lasted five seconds, but caused no damage. Most of the clocks in the town stopped, and the thermometer fell from 27° Reaumur to 14° (93° to 63½° Fahrenheit). The weather was rainy, and on the following morning there was a thick fog."

"Turin, July 27.

"The following notice of the shock of earthquake felt here the day before yesterday appears in the *Government Gazette*:—

"This shock took place a little after midday, accompanied by a circumstance worthy of being pub-

lished, which is this:—The two clocks with pendulums in the Royal Observatory stopped, while that which marks the ‘medium time’ indicated 0h. 57 min. 24 sec., and the other the corresponding instant of ‘sidereal time.’ The plane of the oscillation of the first declined 10 degrees, and the plane of the oscillation of the other is in the precise direction of the meridian. Having measured the declination of the walls where other clocks had stopped, I found it 52, 54, and 64 degrees. In the same apartment in which there is a wall which declined 54 degrees, and another perpendicular, it happened that the oscillating pendulum continued its course without the smallest alteration. It may be asserted, however, that the phenomenon embraced, in this region at least, a portion of the terrestrial superficies contained between two azimuth planes forming an angle of 64 degrees, computed from the south towards the west, commencing from the meridian of Turin. The duration of the undulatory vibration from west towards east was about eight seconds.

“The shock has been felt at Chambery, Alexandria, and Genoa, according to telegraphic intelligence.

“The earthquake that in the year 1755 destroyed a great part of the city of Lisbon happened on the 1st of November, and began at 9 40 in the morning. It is known that the shock was felt at the same moment in the Valais, and particularly at Briga, and in the neighbourhood of Neufchatel.

“Milan and Abbiategrosso are the two points nearest to our vicinity in which there was an indication of this earthquake towards 13 30, A. M.

"I wished to notice these circumstances, whence it better appears that there is no connexion between the present earthquake and the disaster which occasioned so much grief a century past.

PLANA, Astronomer Royal.

*Turin, July 26.*

"More recent reports from other parts of the country confirm the time and violence of the shock of the 25th, though they differ diametrically from the account of the Astronomer Royal as regards its direction ; and yesterday morning (26th) three slight shocks were felt about 10 A. M. at Turin, Milan, and other places."

The next series of striking phenomena predicted to precede the end, are "signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars." I do not quote numerous statements in the papers more or less illustrative of the occurrence of them, lest I might be guilty of injuring instead of explaining and illustrating this special part of the prophecy of our Lord. But it would seem highly probable that literally the sun, the ruler of the day, and the moon, the empress of the night, will be darkened. You reply, "But how can we suppose that anything transacted in this little orb can cast a shadow millions of miles away amid the orbs of heaven." I answer, when our Lord was crucified, the sun at noon-day was covered with an impenetrable pall ; and, long before that event, it is

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recorded in the history of Joshua that the sun and the moon stood still upon Gibeon, and in the valley of Ajalon. . And if a literal obscuration of the sun occurred at the crucifixion of Christ, it is not impossible, and in the light of prophecy it is not improbable, but rather in accordance with Divine predictions, that some such obscuration should occur, as a signal of the nearness of the approach of the era when Christ comes to sway the sceptre, and to reign over a world at length at peace with God, and its people at peace with one another. But it is important to add, that some of the ablest commentators think that this prediction is to be interpreted as strictly figurative; and certainly in the Apocalypse, and in the dream of Joseph, the sun, and the moon, and the stars, are undeniably used to denote principalities, authorities, and powers. The sun is used as the type and symbol of imperial power; the moon, of ecclesiastical jurisdiction; the stars are expressly said to be the ministers of the Church. Or, if we take the sun to denote the Sun of righteousness, as the great type of our blessed Lord; the moon, as the visible Church; the stars, the ministers of that Church; and the darkening of all, the obscuration of the pure light of the first from beneath, and the corruption of the others by error; need I ask any to look round at this mo-

ment and see the too obvious fulfilment? How many stars, that recently shone on England with all the brightness of apostolic days, have become wandering stars, we fear, for ever! How much of that pure light that shone from above on the Church of this land, and still shines in its Liturgy and its Articles, has been eclipsed by some that try to import mediæval darkness where Protestant and Scriptural sunshine only should be. Can we resist the conclusion, if we may take this prediction strictly in its figurative meaning, that it is at this moment most remarkably fulfilling. The love of many is becoming cold; bright lights are being shaded; the truth of the gospel is denied or eclipsed; the visible Church is passing into shadow, and the brightness of her best and her earliest days departing, at least for a season. But while I admit the figurative, I must still prefer the literal application, and look for its occurrence.

There is another prediction scarcely less notable. There shall be pestilences, and plagues, and famines, in divers places. It is important always to remember that we must not take one symptom as if it were the only one, and lay all the stress upon it. We must gather up all the predictions given in Scripture, and all the evidences we shall adduce as fulfilments, and com-

bine them together ; and the result, I submit, of the fair comparison and study of the whole will be the irresistible conclusion, neither impossible nor improbable, that the end of this age is not far distant. Let us here examine this one sign of the end. "There shall be pestilences in divers places," Luke xxi. 11. In Revelation xvi., when the seventh vial, or plague, was poured out, we are told that it was emptied into the air ; thereby indicating that whatever that taint was, figurative or physical, it was to be universal. One plague was poured upon the river Euphrates, another upon the rivers of France ; but the last of all is poured into the air, a figure which denotes the universality of its effect. If that vial be now pouring out, as I shall try to show in my next Lecture, then there must be a taint in the air originating the plagues and epidemics of the earth ; and accordingly we find that since 1848, when that vial began to be poured out, if our views of prophecy be correct, the atmosphere breathed in Belgrave Square as well as that breathed in St. Giles's, and indeed throughout the world, has been tainted or infected by a mysterious but virulent poison, which no chemist has explained, nor any one else can explain, except the interpreter of sacred prophecy. For instance, in 1849, the plague called the Cholera burst upon

the world, wide-spread and desolating, moving with steady progression from the east to the furthest and remotest west. After 1849 had ended its days of sorrow, it was not withdrawn; it was suspended for a season; in 1853 it smote Newcastle with exterminating fury; in 1854 it was concentrated in Golden Square, London, and indeed all over England, in its most terrific form; for men with scarcely a single symptom supposed to mark and identify that special type of plague, well at ten o'clock, were struck down and borne to their burial at eleven or twelve. When I asked the poor people what it was, their answer was, "It is not cholera, sir, it is the black death."

The following extract from the Report of the City Mission of 1855 is illustrative of this.

"In Broad Street, in the parish of St. James's, Piccadilly, there were 84 deaths. Every house but one had at least one dead in it. 189 persons died of cholera in this locality in four days. In the 28 houses in St. Anne's Court, Soho, the deaths were 38, all of persons previously in sound health, but who were dead in a few hours. In the eight houses of Pulteney Court there were in a few days 32 deaths. 32 persons died in four houses adjacent to St. Luke's church in Berwick Street. In no less than 21 cases, within a remarkably small area, husband and wife were both cut off within a few days of each other. In one case the entire household was swept away, consisting of husband, wife, and four children. And in another case of

a family of the same numbers, one child alone remained. The infectious state of the air was shown by the circumstance that 30 non-residents, who resorted as workmen or visitors to these streets, died. There were in all 373 deaths in this locality, almost all within a fortnight. So terrible was the visitation that shops and warehouses were closed, business was at a stand, policemen were stationed to warn passers-by not to proceed within the infected boundaries, hearses could not be obtained in sufficient numbers, while the danger of preserving the dead was so great that some had to be buried without a coffin to enclose them, carried away in the night in the dead-cart which the parish Board sent round from house to house to demand its dead, and even to take them by force where relatives refused to give them up."

In America, in the Crimea, in France, in Spain, in Italy, in Great Britain, this pestilence has hung over the earth during five years like a pall; it is suspended only for a little, and we may expect it again very soon; its force apparently increasing every year it arrives, and the wrecks it leaves behind it becoming more numerous, terrible, and disastrous. No filth explains it; no bad living explains it. These things, the proofs of ignorance or neglect, may facilitate and invite its action, but they do not create the disease itself. If you ask the most eminent and able physicians, they will answer, "It is a mysterious taint we can neither explain nor arrest;" and•



while sanitary measures may and must do much to dilute the virulence of this and every other epidemic, they never can successfully prevent or arrest it. In 1854 it spared no class ; it expended its force upon no level ; it entered the guarded chamber of the palatial residence with impartial energy ; the sentinel fell on his round, the watchman on his beat ; and it struck down proportionably more in the west end of London than in the filthiest and darkest dens and purlieus of St. Giles's. It tracked the noble ship in its course athwart the ocean, and turned the floating arsenal of war into an hospital for the sick ; it marched in the van and rear of our noble army ; it appeared at Varna, and in the Crimea, where it has broken out again, and at Constantinople. It struck down at Alma and at Inkermann those the sword and shot had spared, and more fell within and without Sebastopol the victims of the plague than have fallen by cannon, and shell, and the sabre of the foe. The angel seems now restrained for a season ; the epidemic is arrested for a little ; but all sound interpreters of prophecy believe it is not withdrawn : if we are right in supposing we are under the first sprinklings of the seventh vial, it has become endemic. We may expect its force and virulence intensified, rather than diluted in any respect. It has been stated by medical men,

that ordinary disease, which used to be tractable in their hands, has become suddenly aggravated and unmanageable. Physicians say that the very remedies thought almost specifics, which they used to employ in the treatment of disease, are now so inapplicable, that they would lose their patients were they to exhibit them; and that, instead of depleting, as they used to do, they require to give the constitution all the tone, the support, and the nutriment that can be imparted, in order to enable it to overcome the action of disease; they are obliged, to a very large extent, to adopt the very opposite treatment to that which used to be universal. There is some alteration of the normal state of the air—the seventh vial has been poured into the air. In Constantinople a new and fatal disease has just made its appearance; nobody knows what it is; it is described as a painless but fatal malady.

“ A new and fatal disease has made its appearance here. The cause of death is said to be cholera; but it appears to be a painless malady, which carries off the victim in a few hours. Many persons have lately died of this somewhat mysterious disease, and rumours have spread abroad that the plague has once more visited Constantinople, but that the authorities and the doctors do not wish the truth to be known. But this is only one of the reports which the present excited state of men’s minds leads them to credit with-

out examination. If there be anything new in the disease, it will probably be found to resemble the fever which carried off the Turks in such numbers at Balaklava. The blackness of the body, and the suddenness of the death, seem to denote some connexion between the two maladies." Constant., March 5th, 1855.

Evidences of an abnormal state of the air are also found in the following notice of a lecture by Mr. Hunt, a medical gentleman. He mentions, what others also note, the fact that diseases and epidemics that used to be so easily treated and removed are now become extremely unmanageable, as if indicating a diseased state of the atmosphere.

"A paper *On the Epidemic of Carbuncles and Boils* was read at the Medical Society of London on Saturday the 10th inst., by Mr. Hunt. The facts brought before the Fellows were discussed with great earnestness, and have an unusual claim upon the attention of society at large. The author traced the epidemic to the year 1847, and proved that it had existed in all parts of the world for about eight years. The deaths from carbuncle in London have, during that period, increased gradually from 5 or 6 per annum, up to 50, 70, and last year 91. And although the deaths had been comparatively few, the number of individuals suffering from the epidemic in some one of its forms, carbuncle, boil, whitlow, pustule, stye, &c., appears to have formed a very large proportion

of the population of perhaps every civilized country in the world. The unusual prevalence of smallpox during the same period was remarked as a coincidence, throwing some light on the disease. In order to pave the way for a discovery of the cause of this unusual epidemic, Mr. Hunt called the attention of the Fellows of the Society to a phenomenon which took precedence of the epidemic, and which appeared to be due to the same cause ; namely, the altered type of general disease, which is manifested by a remarkable deficiency of strength and vigour and power of physical endurance, and an intolerance of depletion, and especially blood-letting, which has been noticed by all classes of experienced medical practitioners as a thing rarely met with thirty years ago. Is it surprising, asks the author, that with this almost universal atonic asthenic condition of the public health, an epidemic should have appeared, the distinctive character of which is debility and depression ? In conclusion, Mr. Hunt hinted at the possibility of the existence of a deterioration of the physical and sanatory condition of the civilized portion of mankind, arising from the excessive and restless efforts with which the mind is too generally taxed through the progress of intellectual refinement—a doctrine which met with little acceptance among the Fellows present, who, however, seemed greatly at a loss to account for the epidemic." (From the *Critic*, March, 1855.)

As if to show that man is not the only sufferer, we find a destructive disease appearing in every

department of the vegetable kingdom. First, the humblest root in Ireland was mysteriously smitten all over the country, nobody could say how, or why ; all the efforts of chemistry to detect the cause, or to neutralize its effects, having totally failed. After the potato, the vines of Madeira, of Oporto, of the Douro, of Spain, and Portugal, and France, have all been suddenly blighted ; and every wine merchant knows that wine is increased immensely in value ; and that it will be increased still more. The wine-producing countries are in a state of deep depression at the prospect of the almost universal failure of that which has been the staple article of their support. The vines are not the only sufferers ; all the best fruits of the Alto Douro—limes, lemons, oranges—are more or less blighted.

The following is from the Critic, March, 1855.

“Mr. J. J. Forrester has communicated to the Royal Society the results of his observations on the nature and causes of this terrible visitation of the wine-producing countries ; with a special reference to the conditions accompanying the progress of the disease in the Port-wine districts of the Alto Douro during last year.

“The importance of this subject cannot be over-rated : for, like the potato disease in these kingdoms, which killed by famine and subsequent pestilence thousands of our countrymen, in spite of the wealth

and energy expended in combating the dire consequences of that blight, so province after province of the wine-growing countries in Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, and Madeira, has been stricken with this plague, bringing in its train ruin to the proprietor, starvation and death to the peasant.

“Mr. Forrester tells us an opinion prevails at Oporto and in the north of Portugal that the *Oidium* is not the cause but the effect or symptom of the disease, which disease extends to the wood and the roots; the *sporules* or seeds of the *Oidium* existing in the vine and about its roots. It is also considered that the obstruction to the rise of the sap has its origin in the roots, and that, although vegetation may continue for a while, the fruit will not ripen, and that the vines must die within two years. Black spots are also noticed at the joints of the vines, showing that the body of the plant is infected; together with a new fungus in the shape of small globules, attached to the vine, containing carbonic acid.

“It appears that the wine-districts of the Alto Douro form a long irregular basin, girt by the granite chains of the Tras-os-montes and Beira, and watered by many of the tributaries to the Douro; which basin being of a schistous formation, and protected from bleak winds, is especially adapted to the cultivation of the vine. The margin of the Douro is composed of a strong micaceous clay.

“The usual number of vines requisite to produce a pipe of wine is reckoned at 1000, and the total number in this particular district is estimated at ninety

millions; these are allowed to grow about three feet high, and are planted about six feet asunder.

"The author of this memoir traces the progress of the disease since it was first noticed in 1850 till last year; and shows clearly that it has been accompanied with violent atmospheric changes—now drought, now flood—intensely hot days and bitterly cold nights, with sleet, hail, and bleak winds. As it progressed, its attacks were in the first instance rare, doing little or no actual damage to the entire vintage, although instances occurred of the crop of some vineyards being wholly destroyed; but it was not until July, 1853, that the presence of the disease attracted any special attention on the Douro.

"The usual number of seeds in a black grape is two or three; but in 1853 these were invariably increased from three to five. In that year, instead of procuring a pipe of wine from twenty-one baskets of grapes, as in ordinary seasons, thirty baskets were required to furnish this quantity, and the wine, when produced, was very deficient in strength—ten to twelve pipes producing but one pipe of brandy, the ordinary produce of seven to nine. The fermentation of the wines presented very novel and puzzling characters, ceasing months before the slow secondary fermentation should have been completed. Another most noticeable remark is, that these wines yielded very little argol, i. e. crude bi-tartrate of potash. On examination of the vines last year, Mr. Forrester found the interior of the wood showed the usual appearance of having sustained long-continued cold

and wet, and, externally, palpable evidence of the attacks of the *Oidium*; but the aspect they presented was generally favourable, the vines looking healthy and vigorous, throwing out strong shoots, and promising abundance of fruit. But towards the end of April much rain fell, accompanied by easterly winds, and the *Oidium* reappeared with the most fatal effect, since the vintage of 1854 is reported as being the worst yet endured. Indeed, the continuous rise in the price of the product is good evidence of the extent of the mischief, Port wine having doubled in price at the places of shipment within but a short period. This observer does not regard the small globules containing carbonic acid as an indication of disease—they cover the young shoots, but seemingly without injuring them. The vines, however, have not suffered alone; since in the Alto Douro the oranges, lemons, limes, &c., were all blighted, and every kind of vegetable suffered in some way. From the various circumstances above noticed, the author comes to the conclusion that the *Oidium* is the *cause*, and not the *effect*, of the disease—a conclusion evidently true in one sense, and false in another.

“Mr. Forrester then criticises the various plans which have been proposed for the purpose of checking and ultimately destroying the ravages of this fungus, and estimates the expenses attendant on the application of these remedies. In the main we agree with him that the cost is a bar to the extensive adoption of any of these modes. We think his estimates too high, especially for the use of a solution of sulphur and lime, a very little of which would go a great



way; besides, if gypsum is to be met with near at hand, which is by no means unlikely, it would be a cheap and abundant source of a sulphuret of lime. However, with so poor a country, and one so wanting in appliances to facilitate and reduce the cost of labour, to incur the heavy expenses of sulphuring the vines may be forbidden by dictates of sound policy; *and we are the more led to regard this as true, it appearing that this fearful plague is the concomitant of special meteorological conditions; and that it must cease when these conditions are changed, and ultimately become, if not extinct, no longer a subject of national terror and suffering. It is highly probable, looking to all the circumstances and conditions attendant on the manifestation of this scourge of the vine, that, like the potato disease, it will be found to have progressed from year to year till it attains its culminating point, when its decline will commence, until the Oidium is no longer heard of. Let us trust that it culminated last year. The frost of this winter, so often the forerunner of warm, settled summer weather, is a favourable omen to the wine-grower."*

We have thus seen the evidence of the plague in the air, the prediction, and the corresponding occurrence, of plagues and pestilences in divers places; a universal morbid action in the vegetable and in the animal world; both suffering beneath the influence of a mysterious taint that we can neither explain, neutralize, nor anticipate. Should this disease go on for the future, still ad-

vancing, it will only strengthen more the conviction of students of prophecy, that the seventh vial, with its last plague, has been poured into the air; and is productive of a universal taint, indicating, as far as we can see, that things will be worse before they are better. And if it be so, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"

The next predicted precursor will be "wars and rumours of wars." The first rumour of war that recently startled us was with America; it died away, and we are thankful that these two powerful nationalities are at perfect peace. The second rumour was war with France; and the powerful Emperor who sways its sceptre with such energy, and wisdom, and success was expected not as the ally and the guest of our Queen, but the avenger of Waterloo with all its antecedents. That rumour has died away upon the breeze, and a brighter result has come round than we were led to anticipate. Next the tide of war rolled across the plains of Italy; dashed its waves against the walls of the "mistress of the world;" and the round shot of the eldest daughter of the Church pierced the roof, and were seen bounding on the consecrated floor of St. Peter's. At this moment all Italy is a volcano, repressed, not quenched; the quiet of France depends upon the life of one

powerful ruler ; Austria deprecates war, and yet dares not be at peace ; Prussia is in the agony of irresolution ; Hungary, long depressed in heart, begins to feel her hopes beat high ; and Poland, the memorial of European sin, threatens to start to her feet and be Poland once more ; and there is not one of these nations at this moment that does not stand literally with its hand upon its sword-hilt, not knowing who next may be its foe, or where or from whom the flames of war may break forth. Lastly, the Russian autocrat, thinking that France had more upon its hands than it could manage ; calculating that England and France had traditional hostilities that never could be quenched ; and ever longing to possess Constantinople, and the fair and sunny lands of Eastern Christendom ; believed that the hour was come when he might hurl his gigantic avalanches upon Western Europe, and possess the prey and take the spoil, and plant his victorious eagles on the mosques of Constantinople, and be the representative of a formidable power, to which Western Christendom would be able henceforth to offer, in all probability, no successful resistance. Have we ever had a decade disastrous as the last ten years ? Wars, rumours of wars, spreading as flames in the prairies of America ; and the prospects of peace, that the death of the mighty auto-

crat induced us to indulge in for a little, crushed apparently for ever ; and the boom of the cannon around Sebastopol breaking out only more terrible from the momentary lull and respite that occurred. When we think what our brave countrymen are now passing through in the Crimea ; how many gory beds are daily made for mangled men ; and how many heroic hearts have been stilled to beat no more,—one feels horror at the very thoughts of war that no language can express. But we feel that it is defensive of our all, our homes, and our throne ; that our policy is justified by principle, and is not that of proud kings warring against rival emperors for vain-glory, but of a nation that knew it would be overwhelmed if it allowed the imperial robber, armed with power, to approach so near as he wished and tried. The deep consciousness that we are sustained by principle, and that war, however terrible, is, notwithstanding the eloquent protests of the Manchester school, inevitable sometimes, and a duty and necessity now, prevents us from shrinking in horror, in absolute horror, from the scenes that every newspaper records. There is one relieving thought,—a spring of happiness. I look around upon all the scenes, the actors, and the agents in the midst of them ; and I feel that they are not one of them acting by chance, or as the mere

agent of human policy ; they are in the hands of God ; all of them are engaged in sweeping the earth to prepare the way of the Lord. And I can pay my additional taxes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with this sustaining and consolatory thought, that I am contributing, though he does not believe what we know, to the spread of the everlasting gospel, to the emancipation of truth, and to prepare the way for the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amid all this, we read of "men's hearts failing them for fear." Feel, if you can, the steadiest and noblest pulse that beats at the bravest wrist in the land, and you will learn what that means, "Men's hearts failing them for fear." There is in the minds of statesmen a presentiment of coming woe, a foreboding of approaching doom ; cabinets are at their wits' end, their policy confounded, their blunders by-words. Italy at this moment is a volcano, and Austria knows it. The vast population of France is encamped, not domesticated. Only a people enlightened by Scriptural education can be a great nation. If that fine people, not the least noble in Europe, had only our privileges, our Bibles, our sanctuaries, our sermons, they would be as noble a race as the sun shines on. But France at this moment enjoys a *bivouac*, not a home. Russia, all the time that we have

been vainly trying to persuade her into peace, has been gathering like a gigantic northern avalanche, and preparing to burst upon the nations of Christian Europe; and, as I shall show, to fulfil that dread mission which I fear is hers, to cleave her way to the plains of Palestine, and there to perish in her pride, in the last fierce and terrible convulsion which startles a world from its scepticism, and awakens a Church from her dreams, the tocsin of the approach of the chariot-wheels of Him whose right it is to rule.

There will be "distress of nations." And lastly, "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." There has been great difficulty felt as to what this sign of the Son of man is. A most able critic on the New Testament, the Rev. Mr. Alford, in his learned Commentary on the Greek New Testament, expresses himself thus: "'The sign of the Son of man,' is manifestly a sign in the heavens by which we shall know that the Son of man is at hand. On the whole, I think no sign completely answers the condition but that of the cross; and accordingly we find the Fathers mostly thus explaining the passage." Now I cannot think that this will be

the sign, because Scripture gives us no intimation of the cross being recognised of God as a holy thing. It happened to be the Roman instrument of punishment on which the Son of God suffered for our sins; but if his suffering on that cross consecrated it, we might infer that his suffering by the Jews consecrated them. I cannot see in the cross, as a cross beam, any moral significance that could warrant one in believing without evidence that it will be seen in the skies as the consecrated sign, and precursor of the advent of our Blessed Lord. If this sign be not the conjunct appearance of all the phenomena predicted by our Lord—a solution not improbable—it is in all likelihood the personal appearance of Elijah, clearly predicted as the herald of the advent of the Son of God. We read in Malachi, iv. 5, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.” My impression is—and I ask you to take it for what it is worth; if you do not agree with me, we must agree in such matters to differ—that Elijah will come again in person. First, John the Baptist was not Elijah. The prediction in Malachi is, that Elijah shall

come in the great and terrible day of the Lord. John the Baptist came in the softly dawning morn of a quiet and a peaceful day ; whereas Elijah is to come in the great and terrible day of the Lord ; at which we are told that the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know him not. And, in the second place, we find that the predicted success of Elijah is, that he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers. Did John the Baptist do so ? Our Lord says that he came neither eating nor drinking, and men said, " He hath a devil." He was taken and beheaded. Did John avert the curse—" Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse " ? Jerusalem was smitten with a curse, and John did not avert it. But there is a passage in the 17th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, where we have an allusion to Elijah, which it is necessary to explain ; it is in these words : " And as they came down from the mountain "—the mount of transfiguration—" Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come ? " Now what was our Lord's reply ? " Jesus answered and said unto them,



Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things." He does not say, "You have misunderstood it;" but he announces, as a yet future event, "Elijah shall first come, and shall restore all things." But then he adds, "Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed." Now is the Elijah of the prophecy, "shall come," and the Elijah of the historical statement, "is come," one and the same person? There is irresistible evidence that they are not. In the first place, I return to John's own testimony respecting himself. When the question was asked him in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, "Who art thou? Art thou Elijah? Art thou that prophet?" John answered, "I am not." It is quite clear that John, who knew what he was, says expressly, "I am not Elijah." But it is asked, how do you meet our Lord's saying, "Elijah is come already"? It is explained in Luke i. 17, "John shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah." There is the explanation. Elijah in spirit and power has already come; but at the last advent, the great and terrible day of the Lord, Elijah translated will come in person and restore all things, for John restored nothing: and he will turn the heart of the fathers to the children, which John did not; and he will avert the curse, which John

failed to do. And therefore it is most probable that the first sign of the approaching glory of our Lord will be a solitary and mysterious messenger, walking the wide streets of Christendom, or appearing in the air; and doing, in reference to his advent in glory, what the Baptist said in reference to his advent in humiliation and in sorrow. "Behold," not "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world," as John said; but, "Behold the Prince of the kings of the earth, who is coming to them that look for him, without sin unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last day." This appears to me to be far more Scriptural than the idea of Mr. Alford, however unwilling one may be to dissent from so able and learned a critic.

We have examined, first of all, the fulfilment of the prediction, "earthquakes in divers places;" we have noticed plague and pestilence, as premonitory of the end of the age; we have listened to wars and rumours of wars; we have seen the effects of some mysterious taint communicated to the air that we breathe, and its influences on the animal and vegetable kingdoms respectively. I would not venture to assert that any one of these is an absolute warning that Christ is at our doors; but if you take all these, and combine them with the moral evidences which will be ad-

duced in the next Lecture, you will be constrained to infer that we occupy a most solemn and responsible position towards the close of one age, and in reference to the advent of another. I would not venture to assert that any physical phenomena that have yet occurred are of such portentous magnitude, or of such frequency, as to warrant the conclusion that they are the very signs predicted by our Lord; but I do submit that, in drawing attention to these, and showing that, if not the absolutely finished, they are the constantly growing fulfilments of predictions 1800 years old, I indicate such a continuous contrast of prediction with performance as must solemnize, intensely interest, and cannot possibly create any fanaticism among them, who, in the exercise of common sense, Scriptural investigation, patient and prayerful study, hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches.

Let me combine all these with the chronology of prophecy. First, there is constantly referred to in Daniel, and in the Apocalypse, 1260 years as the duration of the spring-tide and domination of the great Western Apostasy. In order to find the end of that epoch, we must ascertain first where it began. It began when Justinian invested the Bishop of Rome with supreme civil, in addition to ecclesiastical and spiritual, power,

which was in the year 530. Then most probably began the 1260 years constantly referred to as the measurement of the supreme domination of the Papacy. Add 1260 years to 530, and it brings us down to 1790. Now it is predicted that at 1790, the end of this era, the Papal power should begin to be gradually consumed, till it should receive its final and supernatural blow, which should strike it down and dissipate it for ever. From 1790 down to the day when the present Pope Pio Nono was a refugee on a coachman's box from the subjects that he quoted as the peaceful, accomplished, and holy models of Christendom;—from that period, I say, till the present, there has been gradual decline, as we shall see in a subsequent Lecture, of the Papal power. In France Napoleon III., it is said, has authorized the circulation of the Protestant Bible amid the ranks of the French army; whole *communes* are renouncing Romanism; and the parish church of Villefavard, where Mass was celebrated, is now, I understand, a Protestant church. A Roman gentleman told me that in Rome nine-tenths of the population are hostile to the present Hildebrandic domination exercised by a camarilla of miserable priests under Pio Nono; that one-third of them, at the least, are Protestants searching the Bible for truth; and that if the

French bayonets were withdrawn—that stain upon French greatness—Pio Nono would not occupy his throne for many hours afterwards. Sardinia has burst the restraints of the Popedom; and the moment, you observe, it ceased to be under priestly dominion it took its place in the family of nations, and vindicated its claims to be a brave and heroic people. And if you go to Ireland, there you find the great difficulty of statesmen is dissolving every day. There once was a sort of apology for Maynooth; there once was a seeming apology for endowing the Roman Catholic priests; but by and by there will be no priests to endow, or at least few flocks that the priests will have to minister to. And instead of Ireland being a Popish country, I believe the day is approaching when that fine people will take a leading place amid the Protestant nations of the earth; and, through the instrumentality of the Irish Church Mission, so signally blessed, a new and nobler day awaits that long depressed, ill treated, but promising race. Thus we have seen everywhere the decline of Romanism begin from the expiring of the 1260 years.

Daniel says at the end of his prophecy, “From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and

ninety days." We have seen that the 1260 days ended at 1790 ; add the thirty days which Daniel here gives in his number 1290, and this will bring you down to 1820. By a remarkable coincidence, the 2300 years that were to begin at the meridian glory of the Persian empire, according to Daniel, expire at 1820, the same terminating date as that of the 1290 days. At that period the Mahometan Crescent should begin to wane, or Euphrates dry up ; the evidence of which we reserve to a subsequent Lecture. Then after that Daniel says, " Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." Add to the 1290 days, ending at 1820, 45 days more, and it brings you down to 1865. Now what I want to impress is this : I do not say that this dispensation ends in 1865 ; I do not assert, as if I were a prophet, that the age will then be finished ; but that all these prophetic epochs cluster together and find their exhaustion and their consummation between 1820 and 1865 : this at least is remarkable. What is corroborative of this, Clinton, one of the most accomplished chronologists,\* maintains, and shows as well as maintains, that the chronology in the Acts, xiii. 18, is the correct chronology ; namely,

\* See Essay on Hebrew Chronology, in vol. iii. of *Fasti Hellenici*.

that the period from the *exodus* to the building of the temple is 580 years instead of 480, as in 1 Kings vi. 1. He makes the date of Creation to the Birth of Christ 4138 years : if this be so, then about 1862, according to his date, 6000 years will have passed away since the creation. Now what does the Jew generally believe ? That the seventh thousand year is the great *sabbatismos*, the great sabbatical year, the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Rabbi Ketina says, " Out of seven years every seventh is the year of remission ; so out of the seven thousand years of the world the seventh millenary shall be the millenary of remission, that God alone may be exalted in that day."\* A Jewish tradition also exists, that the world endures 6000 years ; 2000 before the law, 2000 under the law, and 2000 under the Messiah.† " In 6000 years shall all things be consummated." Lactantius states that the world shall continue six ages, or 6000 years. The next one thousand years will be the Millennium. It is well observed by Bishop Newton, that the Church of Rome has persecuted this doctrine always and everywhere. The Millenarian, which is the Scriptural, view is entirely hostile to her pretensions. Just as the six days

\* See Bishop Newton on Prophecies, p. 663, Lond. 1852.

† Mede, quoted by Newton.

have their seventh, the 6000 years will have their seventh thousand, or what we call the millenium. And is it not remarkable that all the great prophetic epochs terminate about or soon after 1865? that the true chronology of creation should show that the seventh millenary begins about that period, when the Jews expect that their great *sabbatismos*, or holy sabbath, is to begin? We dare not pronounce the hour and the day; but the period, and the time and the signs of it, every man is called upon to know and to study:—if we take the chronology of the age; if we take the physical phenomena symptomatic of the approach of the close which I have referred to; and if we combine with these the moral and magnificent ones I shall bring before you in the next Lecture; is it fanaticism, is it presumption, is it folly, is it rash, to express a solemn belief that we are at this moment not very remote from the winding up of that dispensation, of which our Lord says, “The harvest is the end of the world”? But it has been objected, “If your ideas should be proximately correct, and if this dispensation is probably to end in the course of some ten or fifteen years more; then, we may give up everything.” I answer, No; prophecy is to furnish to me streams of joy; plain precepts are to determine to me the paths of duty. When



I want to know what is my duty, I do not open the page of prophecy—I read God’s precepts; when I want to know what is to be my joy, I open God’s page of prophecy, and read what is there. But what is the command of the Great Master? The Great Captain of the faith says to every soldier in his army, “Occupy,” not till within ten years of my coming; but “Occupy till I come.” Let the soldier stand by his post; let the sentinel be found on his beat; let the sailor be on the deck, the professor in his chair, the physician by his bed-side. And let men never forget that a soldier in the trenches may serve Christ as well as a minister in the pulpit; and that a sailor on the deck may live that religion which the preacher unfolds in the sanctuary. Wherever God in his providence places us, there is our place and our path of duty also. If you cannot honour God where you are, you never will honour Him where you would be. God asks you to honour Him where you are; and when you have done that He will then say, “Come up higher, and I place you where you should be.” What is the prediction of our Lord as to what will be when He comes? “Two women will be grinding at the mill”—the duties of life going on—“one shall be taken,” and changed, and borne into glory; “the other shall

be left." Two ministers shall be seated on the platform; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left: two members of parliament in the senate; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left: two magistrates upon the bench; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left: all life's duties going on in the accustomed way, when Christ comes with the speed and splendour of the lightning-flash. What is wanted is not renunciation of duty, but hearts lifted higher. Sin does not consist in doing only what is forbidden, but in excessive attachment to what is lawful. Our great care is not watchfulness against duties, but against excessive attachment to places and things among which God has placed us.

And when these things shall begin to come to pass; when the sign of the Son of man shall appear; when the echoes of His footfall shall reverberate through Christendom; when a cry, loud and piercing, shall ring from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh;"—what are you to do? Soldier, sell your commission? No, but do your duty as a soldier, yet looking higher. Sailors, leave the deck? No, but have your loins girt, and be ready there when He comes. Tradesmen, leave your shops? No, but, Soldier, sailor,

merchant, tradesman, "lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." Such is the blessed hope.

And if it be true that all things are about to pass through a severe and an awful ordeal; if it be true that we stand on the margin of an unsounded and a solemn sea; if it be possible that some in this assembly may never die, but put on this immortal and this incorruptible in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, and at a moment's notice; then, "seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" looking for and hasting unto the advent of that day when a new heaven and a new earth shall supersede the old, and all things shall be made new. When, in the words of a beautiful English poet,

"The groans of nature in this nether world,  
Which heaven has heard for ages, have an end,  
Foretold by prophets and by poets sung.  
The time of rest, the promised Sabbath, comes;  
Six thousand years of sorrow have well nigh  
Fulfilled their tardy and disastrous course  
Over a sinful world, and what remains  
Is merely as the working of a sea  
Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest."

### III.

#### THE MORAL AND SOCIAL SIGNS OF THE END OF THE PRESENT AGE.

“And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”—REV. xvi. 16—21.

I STATED in the course of my introductory remarks to this most interesting subject,—interesting specially at the present moment,—the application of inspired prophecy as far as we can trace it, humbly, meekly, I might say diffidently, to those startling events that are passing. It cannot be the desire of any enlightened Christian to predict, but simply to proclaim and unfold, as

far as he may be able, what God has foretold in His own blessed volume. It requires the special grace of Pentecost to make a man a prophet; it requires the grace that is always to be had for asking to make one a faithful expounder of God's inspired word. I may be wrong in some of my interpretations of the unfulfilled, and need, therefore, forgiveness; I cannot be wrong in my expositions of essential truth; and for these, therefore, I demand, in the name of Him whose ambassador I am, instant unwavering acceptance. Christians differ about the details of the future; they do not differ about the essentials of the cross of Christ and Him crucified.

In my second Lecture I endeavoured to show that certain great physical events, thundering and lightening in every point of the horizon round us, indicate at least that we are arrived at a remarkable era, and powerfully suggest the high probability that these are the times shadowed forth in that sacred volume which throws light upon the past, gives direction for the present, and not a little for the future also. I stated that one of the great signs of the advent of our Lord would be pestilences in divers places, with increasing intensity and accumulating numbers. I noticed also that another sign of the nearness of the end would be earthquakes in

different places. I met the objection which some people still urge, "How can you say that these will be signs of the last days? There have been always earthquakes; there have been always pestilences." Quite true; but our Blessed Lord knew this when He gave the prophecy, and yet He predicted that accumulating shocks of the earth, increasing taint in the air poisoning the very element of human life, would be two of the prominent and startling signs of the nearness of the end. Let none lay the stress of a conclusion upon any one event predicted or come, but take all the facts, phenomena, features I have enumerated as actual occurrences, and compare them with the predictions of that book which is always right when we are wrong in our interpretations. By a just and impartial comparison of the whole, we shall see God in history the reflection of God in the Bible. For what is prophecy but future history indicated in the past? And what is history? Prophecy passing into the present. Take and compare both; and see if it be not highly probable that predicted phenomena are now lightening the skies, convulsing the earth, giving token of the distant sound of the chariot-wheels of Him who comes to judge the ungodly, but to take His believing and beloved people to Himself for ever.

I noticed in my remarks in the former Lecture, that wherever there are material phenomena developed in the earth without, there are, and have been invariably, moral phenomena developed in the moral world within, as accompaniments of these. We shall find that every prediction in this book is not only to have its literal fulfilment as a physical and material fact, but also its moral fulfilment in its figurative and symbolical sense also. For instance, if any of those who are exceedingly figurative interpreters of prophecy were to read that passage in an ancient prophet, "Thy King," meaning Christ, "cometh to thee lowly, riding upon an ass, and upon the foal of an ass," they would say, "Of course we do not expect that that is to be literally fulfilled; no doubt it is a figurative phrase, meaning that our Great King, Messiah, will come in great humility and lowliness." But when we come to read the history, which is prophecy translated into fact, we find that not only had this prophecy its moral significance, but its literal also, for it was *verbatim* and literally fulfilled, and the ancient prophecy quoted on the occasion of its fulfilment to establish and prove the modern fact. The prediction of a Star that was to come out of Jacob in the remarkable prophecy of Balaam is another instance. All know it is a prophecy of the Messiah. So it

was; He is the Bright and the Morning Star; and therefore, morally, He is in fact the fulfilment of the prediction of a coming Star. But when we come to read the fulfilment of the fact, we find that not only does the Morning Star make its magnificent ascent from a lowly manger in the out-house of a village inn; but that a literal, material, astral phenomenon, whatever its nature was, guided the Magi and the shepherds to the very place where the Bright and the Morning Star had begun his lasting ascension. So that in these two instances we have evidence of a literal as well as moral fulfilment of the prophecies of ancient Scripture.

The passage at the close of Rev. xvi., which contains the action of the seventh vial, states that there was to be at the opening of that vial—the chronology of which I might establish by a reference to the sixth—a great earthquake, an earthquake so great as had not been before. Now I can see, partly from the peculiar phraseology that surrounds it, evidently moral, that this great earthquake is here used mainly in a sense in which that phenomenon is used in other parts of Scripture, to denote a moral, political, and social convulsion. I look back to 1848; I took particular care during that year to read with great assiduity the columns of the daily papers, as reflectors



of public feeling, as I never felt it necessary or attempted to do before. I watched in each of the morning and the evening newspapers most carefully the phraseology it employed to denote that great convulsion that smote Europe at its heart, shook a sagacious dynasty from its supremacy as the autumn wind does a sere leaf from a tree, and tossed it upon the shores of the country supposed to be traditionally hostile and opposed. I watched the phraseology the papers employed. The "Times" newspaper called it "That great earthquake;" the "Morning Herald" called it "That unprecedented shock;" another called it "That strange and unexpected convulsion." And I was exceedingly struck by seeing in these newspapers, conducted by able men that probably never paid to the Apocalypse any special attention, how the very words almost of the seventh vial were the common phrases of the ordinary correspondents of every newspaper published in London in the course of the year 1848; every organ of public sentiment appeared to view it as a moral earthquake of no ordinary force. I ask any one to look back and read its story, and say if it was not a terrible convulsion. Kings fell from their thrones, and dynasties were swallowed up in a moment, and nations were upheaved as by subterranean forces. No king knew how

long his crown might keep around his brow. Rome, the mistress of the world, the model Christian kingdom of the earth, as it professes to be, shook to its very centre; and so shook, that it threw off in its horror that Pontiff who claims to be the Vicar of Christ and the head of the whole of Christendom. Austria, during the same convulsive shocks, had to interpose by arms to keep her satellites in their orbits in Italy. Germany was agitated; Hungary was convulsed; Poland staggered to and fro like a drunken man; and even our own nation felt the unspent vibrations of that European explosion; but, having God's light in its heart, Christian people in its homes, a Queen without a precedent and without a parallel upon the throne, she weathered the storm, and remains to this day, notwithstanding her need of administrative reforms, the admiration of all the nations of the earth. We thus see how far that shock spread its vibrations, and how much it agitated the nations of the earth. So far did it extend, that distant China oscillated; and prejudices, more inveterate and more impregnable than walls, fell down; and at this moment Peking and other cities and capitals of that nation are reached and are accessible to the footsteps of them that bring glad tidings of great joy; and all the signs of a nation starting from its grave,

leaping to its feet, becoming Christian in a day, are at this moment thrown up by the millions that constitute that swarming and ancient empire. And what led to Russia taking up its present policy? She too felt the shock, saw that the nations of the earth were tossed and driven like leaves in the whirlwind; and, thinking France had more upon its hands than it could manage; that Britain had just enough to do to keep all its own under its sway; that Austria and Germany were too frightened to resist; said, "Now is the moment for me to carry on my mission,—a mission begun and felt a hundred years ago,—and as I have appropriated Poland, and absorbed the Danubian provinces, I will now seize upon Constantinople, the ancient mistress of the East, with all the glorious traditions of a thousand years, with its capacious harbours and noble seas; and having extirpated the Moslem, consecrated the Mosque into a Cathedral again, and made St. Sophia the mother-church of the East, I will then take time to consider when and where I may choose to descend like an Alpine avalanche upon Britain, and teach her the duty and necessity of being subjugated to the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Czar its representative head, and the necessity of humbly taking up the position of a depressed and

second-rate nation, shorn of her ancient and traditional glory." We have here the whole explanation and reason of the origin of the Russian war. Now an earthquake, a literal earthquake, is not a shock, felt and over; but, as is now seen at Constantinople and Broussa, a succession of convulsive tremors of the earth, that may last days, or months, or it may be a year;—I believe that the earthquake, the first shock of which occurred in 1848, still continues its vibrations, and that we are labouring still under the effects of that great explosion that shook Europe at its centre in that year. If we look around us we cannot help seeing it. Italy is a vast volcano, like its Vesuvius, ready to explode, and its miserable rulers are at their wits' end how to keep their serfs, ecclesiastical serfs they may be, but serfs still, in a state of subjugation. Rome, the capital of Christendom as it vaunts itself, is propped up not by Austrian bayonets, which, bad as it might be, would still be the bayonets of an ultramontane daughter, a loyal child of the Roman Catholic Church; but by the bayonets of France, that never yet accepted ultramontanism. What do you think is the secret story of that stupid dogma called the Immaculate Conception; or the determination come to that the Virgin Mary never was born a sinner, that she

was at her very conception infinitely pure and spotless? The Pope was at his wits' end, and therefore he was anxious to make a little capital in Christendom, in order to lead the nations, beginning to be sick of his supremacy, to dream that he had recovered the long-lost and awful power of creating new dogmas still. But instead of being a triumphant achievement, a lucrative stroke, it has proved a miserable and contemptible failure. France—brave, gallant, and noble France, to whose sagacious and powerful ruler we wish many days of prosperous and peaceful reign, and whose life at this moment is, account for it as you like, find fault with it as you like, unspeakably precious to Europe and to Christendom—France at this moment, though under a master-hand, enjoys a calm. She has not found peace—she is quiet through a force *ab extra*, not principle *ab intra*. Germany, I need not add, is rent and torn; Spain is in the throes of a terrible convulsion; America is agitated through all her provinces by the conflict between the Know-Nothings and the foreigners sent out by the Jesuits in order to subjugate that great Republic to the Pope. Turkey is effete and nearly dead. All Europe, in short, presents the awful spectacle of kings, every one with his hand upon his sword-hilt, not knowing when he may

be called to draw it, not in defence of his people or their rights, but of his throne and his very existence. Whether we look abroad or at home, amid other nations or among ourselves, we witness a universal restlessness among men; as if they felt preternaturally agitated, moved and shaken by forces they are unable to resist. The great cry that swells upward from every quarter, to have the reform of this, and the reform of that, and the alteration of something else, is proof of the poor, sick, weary patient dreaming that if his bed were changed he would be well; and forgetting that the secret of his restlessness is not the bed he lies on, or the circumstances he is placed in, but in his heart not right in the sight of God, and therefore not at rest in his bosom. What explains all the feeling that we see predominant and increasing amid the thousands who incessantly seek to change systems, politics, churches, forms, ceremonies? It is human nature, conscious of something wrong, and in its restlessness, its ceaseless restlessness, pining and struggling after what will not be till the heart feels its polarity attained and glorified in Jesus, and in the everlasting rest, the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Blind man's prescription is to give the restless creature something that he has not; God's grand prescription

is to make the restless creature something that he is not. Man's plan is to change the patient's bed; the Divine plan is to heal the patient's heart. There is an almost universal desire to change systems in order to attain rest. Some want to sweep away the Liturgy in one Church; others, to introduce a Liturgy in another Church. We think if we had only this little thing, and that new thing, or that old form, or this novelty, that all would be right. We are greatly mistaken. It is not new machinery that we want, but it is the breath of heaven to pass upon the old; it is not new systems that we need, but living and devoted men to work the systems that we have. In the very worst Church in Christendom let there be a living man in the pulpit, and it will be a blessing to thousands; in the very best Church in Christendom let there be a lifeless man in the pulpit, and it will be a calamity or a curse. What we need is near, personal, living communion with Christ. If our hearts are renewed and transformed by His grace, we shall never go to a bad Church. It is Christians that make a Church; it is not a Church that makes Christians. We have plenty, oh plenty, of Churchianity in this world; what we need is a little more Christianity;—we want to know Christ, not the Church. Change of system will

not necessarily be change of character. The restlessness you feel will not be laid by mechanical alterations. There will be no perfect Church till the Lord of the Church come. The visible Church to the end will consist of tares and wheat mixed up together ; and those great and zealous reformers that go to pull out the tares before the time often do very serious damage to the wheat, and find too late fresh tares spring up in greater crowds than they appeared in before. All Churches upon earth are what one may call provisional. We know what a Provisional Railway Committee is ; it is a committee that exists till the true committee be appointed. The Church of England is a provisional Church ; the Church of Scotland is a provisional Church ; the true Catholic and perfect Church is yet to come ; and when it comes, then that which is provisional shall be done away, and that which is perfect will flourish ; and all the scattered and insulated folds of Christendom shall be lost in one happy, glorious, and blessed flock. The truest minister, you may depend upon it, whatever be the Church he belongs to, is he that preaches Christ best. I look upon the difference between Episcopacy in England and Presbytery in Scotland, and the varied forms of Dissent, exactly as I look



upon the varieties of people's dresses, or upon the faces of different families,—outward diversity of appearance, with inner concord and harmony of heart. If I were asked at this moment who preaches the gospel best, I would answer by giving a simple illustration. Who do you suppose speaks the English tongue best? Not the Londoner, for he has a peculiar accent characteristic of the metropolis. Not the native of Edinburgh, he too has a very circumflex accent characteristic of him. Not the native of the Highlands, where the accents of the mountain tongue are audible amid his purest English. Not the native of Dublin; certainly not the provincialist of Yorkshire, or of Cumberland, or of Wales. Who then speaks the English tongue best? The man that so speaks it, that when he has done you cannot say whether he be a native of England, Scotland, or Ireland; of London, Edinburgh, or Dublin. I now reply to the inquiry who preaches the gospel best. That minister who so preaches that you cannot detect from what he has said whether he be an Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Independent; you have heard from his lips only the catholic accents of the common catholic tongue; he has been preaching, irrespective of sect and system, Christ as all

and in all; and the Christian, high and prominent above the Churchman, the Presbyterian, or the Dissenter.

This restlessness is the remaining evidence of the unexhausted heavings of that great shock which convulsed all Europe in 1848, and has left its traces so wide-spread amongst us. It is illustrated in that feeling which makes man try to add a foot to his stature or to alter the colour of the hair of his head, instead of accepting the circumstances in which God has placed him, and in those circumstances endeavouring to give the greatest glory to God, and to do the greatest good among mankind. A revolution is the easiest thing in the world; a reformation is the most difficult. Anybody can strike the spark that sets a kingdom in a blaze; it is only God's great and holy men that can begin the process that ends in a blessed and lasting reformation.

Another symptom very characteristic of the time in which we live, and indicating the peculiar application of prophetic language to it now, is the strange preternatural earnestness which everybody develops in every department and section of human life. Evidently, as Carlyle—a writer not to be trusted in many things, but an acute observer, and a profound philosopher—remarks, “The age of shams is gone;” pretence is

laid bare ; ceremony is not substance. People are so much in earnest that they estimate things now not by their colour, but by their weight and value ; and whatever they take up is done with an intensity and an earnestness that seem to indicate the whole heart and soul are in it. Science, for instance, pierces every accessible recess, goes to the tombs of buried capitals, and brings up the triumphant proofs from their subterranean depths that God's word is true. Astronomy has improved and combined its lenses ; and the astronomer spends whole nights in the depth of winter tracing the transit of a satellite or shadow on the disc of the moon, as if the issues of heaven and earth depended upon the result. The critic is searching the New Testament now with an analysis so severe that every text has been placed in his crucible, and, thank God, has emerged like fine gold, purer than before it entered. The antiquary is visible everywhere exploring the tombs of nations,—the long-lost memorials of departed ages. Africa's central realms are now become familiar to us ; the Esquimaux, whose home is the perpetual snow, whose dwelling-places are the icy wastes around the Pole, have been visited by the intrepid navigator, and have been dragged into view. I was extremely interested in hearing one day from an officer in

the ship in which the gallant Frenchman Lieut. Bellot, to whom a memorial was recently erected, served, that during six months in the very neighbourhood of the Pole, if I may use that expression, at least in a very high northern latitude, he read a little book of mine; and to many the truths it contained were so blessed that they were born again, and minds dark as the elements around them enlightened; and thus God demonstrated that he had a church at the North Pole as well as in the sunny lands of India and in the favoured parishes of Old England. And what is this achievement of the north-west passage, the evidence of success crowning intense and untiring efforts, but man fulfilling the preliminaries of the promise that the gospel shall be preached to every creature? In the present age the play of babes has become the wrestling of giants; and men seem to feel as if the time that remains were so short that they must work with all their might while the day lasts; they seem to feel as if the sheet of paper were so crowded with what they wish to teach that they must crowd the remaining lines, in greater number, into less space still. There is a presentiment in the human heart, and such presentiments are often prophecies, that we are touching the very margin that severs the age that is from the age

that is to come: and all men—whether they believe it or not, consciously or unconsciously—seem to feel that little space remains between the moment that fleets past with lightning speed and the great eternity which is almost thundering at our doors. If ever it was true, it is literally so now,

“ We live in deeds, not years ; in thoughts, not breaths ;  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial :  
We should count time by heart-throbs ; he most lives  
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.”

These lines more fully express the temper of national life than any words I can employ.

Every man thus earnest and intense may not know the part that he plays, or its connexion with the resultant whole ; but it has a connexion, a necessary connexion, and he is in a hurry to accomplish it. If you are present at an Oratorio, every performer you can see has his own part ; he pays no attention to his neighbour's score ; his only desire is to render efficiently the part that is, by adoption or necessity, his own ; and intensely and entirely he gives himself to it ; and all that he is conscious of producing, or careful of bringing out, are the living sounds that lie latent in the dead notes that are before him : he is part of a mighty whole, and his action is indispensable ; but a master hand is

controlling what a mighty mind conceived ; and a grand and magnificent harmony is the issue and effect.

In that great convulsion, or great earthquake, that shook continental Europe, we read that "the cities of the nations fell ; and great Babylon came into remembrance before God." 'I do not dwell upon the clause "great Babylon came into remembrance before God ;" as in a subsequent Lecture I shall more fully show that since this great earthquake the Church of Rome has come yet more fully under those signal judgments from which she will not recover. At this moment that Church, notwithstanding all the pomp, the pretension, the splendour, and the noise she indulges in, the aggressions she dares, the incursions she attempts, is losing ground day by day ; till there seems no more chance, humanly speaking, and there is no more prospect, divinely reading, of her gaining supremacy in this great land, than there is of Mahometanism or Hindooism becoming the faith of our adoption. Her day is gone ; she is on the very verge of her extinction ; she feels that she is about to be destroyed ; and therefore she will desperately grasp at every throne, and snatch at every sceptre, if she can only gain a foot-hold for a few fleeting years longer. But she comes into "remembrance before God," to re-

ceive her retribution ; and the very first shock of the earthquake that thus brought her “into remembrance before God” was followed by what? The Pope, the head of Christendom, the Vicar of Christ, who says in his canon law that he judges all, and can be judged by none ;—this man, in the metropolis he had made, where there was no heresy to infect, no heretics to trouble ; where there are 360 churches for about 70,000 people ; where there is a priest for every 70 people, and a monk, or teacher of some sort, for every 30 people ;—in a city so favoured as this, Pio Nono, infallible as he pronounces himself to be, the great conservator of Christendom as he thinks he is, has so signally failed, that his own flock, in his own city, which had the advantage of his holy presence, sent him off a homeless refugee, driven to conceal his dignities under a footman’s livery, and too thankful to escape and be anywhere than amid that beloved population which, never disturbed by a heretic, or infected by a heresy, have been quoted by his satellites as the model Church and flock of Christendom. How truly and terribly has great Babylon come into remembrance before God ! Sardinia, I need not add, has justly seized the property of the convents and turned it to a better use ; for her brave battalions are hastening to help us in the Crimea. In Spain, where eccle-

siastical property is being confiscated, the government have at last conceded—wonderful concession from Spain!—that heretics need not be persecuted when dead ; that they may be buried in the same way as the brute is buried, without any public ceremonies or rites, but still decently buried. In France the Church of Rome is no longer a reality, but a detected imposture. Paris has but a handful of priests where it had its thousands. A French gentleman, who belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, and attended one day the church where I minister, remarked to me at the close of the service, “How extraordinary a congregation!” I said, “Indeed ; how so ?” He replied, “Why, more than half the people here are actually men.” I answered, “Yes, why not ?” He said, “In France we see none but ladies in the churches ; here the men would seem disposed to accept the only thing that is good ;” that is, Christianity. It was certainly not very complimentary to the ladies, as he assumed they were less gifted ; but it was his deliberate statement, that in France ladies chiefly attend at public worship, and that men were too busy in attending to better and nobler things. He said he was exceedingly struck by seeing the large proportion of men that attend at public worship here. But what does all this prove ? That Romanism in



France has lost its hold of the population, and is used as a pageant or as a state convenience, and nothing more. In Ireland, day by day, the Irish Church Mission is telling upon every section of it. The Archbishop of Tuam states that he has in his diocese 10,000 who were bigoted Roman Catholics a few years ago, and are now some of them the most exemplary Christians. And this is going on so fast that the Roman Catholics are driven in Ireland to attribute it to bribery, to giving food to the people, and to many other causes than the right one. But they admit the tremendous change, whilst they deplore it. And those of the Roman Catholics that are not converted are going off rapidly to America; and the late American ambassador, the Hon. Abbot Lawrence, told me that the Roman Catholics that arrive on the shores of America, if they do not become Protestants in the first generation, almost invariably become so in the second; as if they were thankful to escape from a sacerdotal thralldom that is altogether intolerable, and to find a home where freedom has a footing, religion a pure altar, and man the noble privilege of bowing before God and saying, without a priest to intervene, "My Father and my God." But I do not dwell upon this point; I must allude rather to the other part of it, that the cities of the nations are

predicted to fall. The great city Rome comes into remembrance, and in the 18th chapter falls. As the word *city* is used in the Apocalypse in the sense of a politico-ecclesiastical body, I interpret "the cities of the nations" as the politico-ecclesiastical bodies of Christendom; and therefore the Established Churches of the nations. But let me premise, because a thing is predicted to occur in fact, it is not thereby proved that God approves of it; it is often the very reverse—the Romish apostasy is predicted, but God does not approve of it whilst he predicts it. I believe in my conscience—and if some differ with me I regret it—that a National Church, with a faithful and devoted ministry, whether on this side the Tweed or on the other, is a national blessing. And as long as in that National Church such noble Articles as the Thirty-nine, or such a pure Confession as the Scotch, are echoed and ministered from the pulpit, so long it is a privilege, and to me a duty as well as a privilege, to adhere. I love my own Church, I love a National Protestant Church; I think it combines that amount of freedom and yet of deference to authority that is most important. We may depend upon it in the present day we need not be afraid of what some are frightened at, the Erastian power, that is, the Queen's power; we need not be afraid of what others call,

again, the power of the people. The power that I dread, the dark shadow that I shrink from as perilous in these times, is the power of the priest, which is often "presbyter writ large." I do believe that one of the greatest advantages of an Established Church is that it keeps the priest in his place, and will not let him on the one hand make himself an ecclesiastical tyrant, nor on the other allow him to break out into mountebank ceremonies, and revive exploded superstitions, and indulge in extravagancies that do not minister to the edification of the people, but rather cast discredit upon that sublime and simple thing, the worship of God in spirit and in truth. But however much we may like a National Church, they are all three doomed. In the Church of England the evangelical party will not submit to the priestly power; the Tractarian party will not submit to what they call the Erastian power. At this moment it is only by management that this great and powerful, and in its doctrines and Articles purely Protestant, Church is kept together. It is vain to try to conceal the solemn fact, that there are elements seething and heaving in its very depths that one day must explode it into fragments. Again, north of the Tweed all know, and painfully know, that in 1843 some excellent and godly

men felt it their duty, as I believe their mistaken duty, to secede from the National Church in quest of a better and a purer. I fear they are now bitterly feeling they have not found it; for whenever we seek new Churches we do not find we have got truer ones, we have only changed from one to another,—sometimes from a better to a worse, not always from a worse to a better. That that Church has been weakened by the secession of those excellent men, and that both Establishments—the one from inner elements, the other from outer elements—are at this moment in at least a precarious condition, is transparently true. And how sad is it also that our schools in Scotland are threatened with dechristianization, in order to be made simply schools for secular instruction. All this is fulfilling the predictions of God: and whilst there may be sin in those that would lift their hands against these Churches, whilst there may be unworthy motives in many that oppose them—I pronounce not—yet the fact of their ruin is predicted as the result of the fall of this great city in the heavings of the last earthquake. He is a very dull observer of the signs of the times who cannot see the approaching and accumulating signs of their destruction. But, blessed fact! the vessel may be shattered, yet the precious aromatic perfume that

is within will only spread the more ; the ship may founder in the waves, but, like Paul's crew, Christ's chosen ones shall all reach the shore. Establishments may fall, but the Church of Christ remains bright as the sun, and fair as the moon, and terrible and impressive as an army with banners, because of the ordeals she has passed through.

During this earthquake, or rather succeeding it, a great hail-storm, the hail of immense size, descends from the Apocalyptic heaven, that is, the upper and firmamental air, according to this Book, which is a divine drama, and bursts upon the earth ; and the nations, instead of being sanctified by it, repent not, and blaspheme God. Need I ask you to cast a look to the distant Danubian provinces, to the cabinet of St. Petersburg, or to the Kremlin ; to the shores of the Dardanelles, the Bosphorus, Sebastopol, and the Crimea, where every turf is a soldier's sepulchre ; and need I show that the great northern hail, the symbol of a northern nation bursting upon the south, or Russia stretching toward the Mediterranean, is the irresistible proof, and, taken with the chronology of this vial and with the other circumstances I have endeavoured to accumulate and collect, the irresistible identification, of what is now going on. First it burst upon the banks of

the Danube; then upon the Crimea; we felt whilst we heard its dread pattering at Inkermann, and Alma, and around the trenches of Sebastopol. And as if every element of heaven and earth conspired with the efforts of the Czar, we saw a tempest unprecedented in its fury lay upon their beam-ends the noblest fleet that ever ploughed the ocean, and bury in its depths some of the bravest crews that ever trod the deck; as if to teach us, by seeing nature harmonizing with God's moral world, that some great epoch in the drama of humanity and of time has just occurred. And if it be true, as I hope not, that we are at this moment far from the capture of that city, the moral effects of failure will be terrible. But I hope we shall succeed. I may here notice what perhaps you may have heard of, and on which I do not stake any credit, but in my interpretation of which I have not yet been proved to be wrong. In the 16th verse of Rev. xvi. it is said, "And He gathered them together in a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." I know great scholars, good scholars, and competent scholars differ; but if it be true that the first syllable of Armageddon is the Hebrew Aar, which means a "city," and that the last syllable formative is merged with one which means "fair," "pleasant," "august," or "magnificent;"—if this be correct,

then the literal translation of Armageddon, a Hebrew word, into which the nations are gathered for the commencement of the last dreadful conflict, is in Greek Sebastopol. I know some think it does not mean a magnificent city, but the city of Augustus, as Adrianople is the city of Adrian. But it is not necessarily so. For instance, the town Neapolis, that is, Naples, is Neapolis, "the new city." So Sebastopol, "the august city." So we have in English Holy Town, New Town, &c. ; and if its ancient spelling was, as I believe, Sebasteapol, my derivation seems most probably the correct one. I do not assert that Sebastopol is the Armageddon of the Apocalypse, though there is no great difficulty in supposing it the beginning, not of the "battle," as our translation reads, but of "the war," as it should be, of Armageddon. Straws floating on the wind indicate the current ; coming events sometimes cast their shadows before ; these singular coincidences, or at least the investigation of them, and discussion of them, may turn men's minds to solemn thoughts and instant hopes ; till peradventure we see that the present war may be the commencement of that last conflict which begins at Sebastopol, but ends only in the plains of Palestine and Jerusalem. A great statesman said, "after me comes the deluge." And Canning, a most saga-

cious statesman, predicted that "the coming war will be a war of opinions and principles." All startling things are gathering and crowding round us in such clusters, and with so striking magnificence, that the most worldly men are beginning to feel that interpreters of prophecy are not after all fanatics and madmen; that the Apocalypse is not a stupid or impenetrable mystery, but an inspired book; and that the Bible is not behind, but far in advance of, the age in which we live.

Under the seventh vial there were to be "voices, and thunders, and lightnings." I know not what is the precise interpretation of this, or whether it may not mean the statement and expression of strange opinions or startling cries; "thunders and lightnings" are, however, the characteristic of the epoch sketched in this vial. I read a single sentence from the "Times" newspaper not long ago—"The electric condition of the political atmosphere in Europe at this moment." How singular that what the Apocalyptic seer calls "thunders and lightnings in the air," the recorder of history should translate into "the electric condition of the political atmosphere in Europe." Whatever it may mean, it seems to me as if at this crisis all men kept in their breath lest they should utter a word which, like an electric shock, they never could recall.



I have read that in the high Alpine regions the guides will tell you that you must not even speak, lest the reverberation of a whisper should move a sleeping avalanche from its resting-place, and precipitate upon you its mass, and occasion your instant destruction. We seem at this moment to live in an age when men seem afraid to give expression to a single word, lest that word should strike against thrones and mingle with the crash of dynasties they expected to last for ages.

We notice another very remarkable prediction of the closing epoch found in Daniel, which I take in connexion with those in the Apocalypse ; "Many shall run to and fro ; and knowledge shall be increased." Let us see how literally descriptive these words are of the present moment. "Knowledge shall be increased." A change has taken place amid the masses of mankind, immense and unmistakeable. Never was the spread of knowledge so earnest a pursuit ; never was the passion for it so ardent, enthusiastic, and universal. The folio that was of old written for the few is now expanded into tracts for the many. The libraries of Ptolemy, or of Alexandria, are now the circulating libraries in every neighbourhood. Systems of divinity and learning, that were once banked up in universi-

ties, have now burst their embankments, and millions slake their thirst where thousands sipped deliciously before. If ever in any age, it is in the present that knowledge has become almost universal. Not many years ago "provincial" meant a man who was barbarous in taste, deficient in learning. I venture to say that the provinces now contain as enlightened people as the metropolis. "Unpolite" literally means living out of the city; and those men were called unpolite, or barbarous, or uncultivated, who were not citizens of no mean city. But now the people outside of London are at least as polite as those that are within the walls. Encouragement is now given to literature such as was never given before. I instance the enormous sums that Scott, Byron, and others have received for, in one respect, evanescent and ephemeral, though brilliant, productions. Compare with this the fact that Petrarch and Dante wrote their poems in exile; that Ariosto and Tasso lived in want, and one died in despair; that Cervantes had to beg his bread; that Galileo had to confess that after all the sun went round the earth, in order to gratify the prejudices of the Pope, and get bread, and escape imprisonment and probably death. Milton sold his copyright of *Paradise Lost* for five pounds. At present half the Bench of Bishops

consist of the sons of petty tradesmen and shopkeepers in England ; the Lord Chief Justice at this moment is the son of a Scottish parish minister. And you will find that our highest nobility, instead of looking down with contempt and derision upon those who have won their way to the high and sunny levels of the world, rejoice and hail them as successful candidates and brothers. The broad sheet at the present day is part of your breakfast-table ; and so dissatisfied are men with the present supply of it every day, in every town, that the House of Commons has passed a Bill for giving it as they suppose larger circulation, and spreading it with still greater facility. The distant transactions of east, west, north, south, are reflected day by day from the broad sheet. We have arrived in this matter at the maximum of possible attainments ; we cannot go beyond them. Schools also of a higher order are springing up in every direction. A few years ago, if a man failed and was unsuccessful as a shopkeeper he was pronounced good enough to be a schoolmaster ; now-a-days the schoolmaster occupies a dignified position ; he is trained and educated for his office ; and I question if one schoolmaster does not contribute as much to the well-being of the country as many a venerable and good bishop. Knowledge is increasing in all directions ; the

schoolmaster and the press, the latter an engine of tremendous power, are spreading far and wide that light which we do not fear but hail.

“And many,” adds Daniel, “shall run to and fro; knowledge shall be increased.” I heard a person make the critical remark, that these words are, literally translated, “knowledge shall be *darted*.” The two Hebrew words are so like each other that it is possible he may be correct. If his criticism be just it would be a very singular coincidence; “knowledge shall be darted,” like lightning. It would exactly describe the phenomenon of the electric wire. How stupendous the fact that the cannonade that thundered this morning at nine o’clock from Sebastopol may be and is recorded in the second edition of the morning papers, or in the evening papers this afternoon! We have here knowledge literally darted like lightning. “And many shall run to and fro.” Is not this the age of travelling? of excessive travelling? of unprecedented locomotion? Have not all calculations been defied? have not all expectations been agreeably disappointed? Have not railways made travelling, as well as provided facilities for it? I will quote an instance here, which I do not profess to authenticate from personal research, and indeed it has been questioned. Sir Isaac Newton

wrote a book upon the prophet Daniel, and likewise upon the Book of Revelation. In one of these he is reported to have said that certain prophecies never could be fulfilled till men travel at the rate of fifty miles an hour;—a very singular prediction. Voltaire, one of the great atheistic spirits of France, in writing upon this subject observed, “When Sir Isaac Newton grew old he began to study the Bible, and said certain predictions could not be fulfilled till men travelled, as they one day would, at fifty miles an hour. Dotard and fool!” Now who is the fool—Voltaire, that assaulted Newton, whose genius trod upon the skirts of the prophet; or Newton, who looked further and saw clearer, and whose prediction has been exceeded by actual fact? My only difficulty in accepting this incident is, that I have read all Newton’s Commentary upon Daniel, and also his Commentary on the Apocalypse, and I have not been able to find the passage. I wrote to Sir David Brewster, a most competent judge and eminent philosopher, and the author of his Life; and he tells me he cannot find it. But he traced it, he said, to the Rev. Mr. Craig, Vicar of Leamington; and I have resolved, at Sir David’s suggestion, to write to him, and ask if he knows the source of this most interesting and remarkable incident.

The Atlantic is now an inland lake ; I can go to Philadelphia in less time than, in my recollection, I took to go to Aberdeen. At this moment the Pacific is beaten white by our steam ships ; America and Britain are almost near neighbours. I have not the least doubt that in a few years the mother in London will be able to talk with her son in Calcutta, and to hold with the speed of lightning, and its certainty too, communications the most delightful the one with the other. Does not this look as if Daniel's prophecy were now being fulfilled, " Many shall run to and fro ; and knowledge shall be increased " ?

Let me allude to another incident, and it is the last I shall mention ;—the universal preaching of the gospel. What is the prophecy ? " This gospel shall be preached to all nations for a witness, and then shall the end come." It does not say all nations shall be converted ; but all nations shall hear it ; and then the end shall come. I do not believe that our Missionary Societies, dutiful and excellent as they are, are to convert the world ; I believe their commission is to call a people for God out of the multitude of this world, and not to convert the world before the great Lord and Saviour come. At this moment the gospel has been preached in every tongue, the Bible translated into every

language; all nations have heard the joyful sound from the Equator to the Pole. And our Lord says that as soon as this gospel has been preached to all nations for a witness, then shall the end come.

There is an old work found in the Augustinian Library at Rome. It is dated 1675, very nearly 200 years ago. The passage I read is at page 150. It is entitled,

*De Fluctibus mysticæ navis : authore Ridolpho Gethier ; Augustæ, 1675. Ante medium seculi xix., seditiones undique in Europa. Erigentur Respublicæ, occidentur reges, optimates, ecclesiastici ; et regulares sua cænobia deserent. Fames, pestilentia, et terræmotus plures devastabunt civitates. Roma amittet sceptrum propter obsessiones pseudo-philosophorum. Papa a suis captivabitur, et sub tributo ponetur ecclesia Dei, quæ bonis temporalibus expoliabitur. Post breve tempus Papa non erit. Princeps Aquilonarius cum ingenti exercitu percurrent Europam, respublicas evertet, rebellesque omnes exterminabit. Ejus gladius motus a Deo Ecclesiam Christi acriter defendet, fidem orthodoxam propugnabit, et imperium Mahometanum sibi subjiciet. Novus Pastor Finalis e littore per signum cæleste veniet in cordis simplicitate et doctrina Christi, et pax erit reddita sæculo.*

“ Before the middle of the XIX. century, seditions will be excited everywhere in Europe. Republics will arise; kings will be put to death, together with the nobility and ecclesiastics; and the religious will de-

sert their convents. Famine, pestilence, and earthquakes will spread desolation over many cities. Rome will lose her sceptre by the invasion of false philosophers. The Pope will be made a captive by his own people, and the Church of God will be placed under tribute, divested of its temporal possessions. In a short time there will be no Pope. A prince from the North will overrun Europe with a great army, destroy the republics, and exterminate all rebels. His sword, wielded by God, will vigorously defend the Church of Christ, uphold the orthodox faith, and subdue the Mahometan power. A new pastor, the final one, will come by a heavenly sign from the shore, in simplicity of heart, and in the doctrine of Christ; and peace will be restored to the world."

It is remarkable that these words should have been composed nearly 200 years ago. If so, they are not the guesses of the unenlightened, but in all probability deductions drawn from the very prophecies I now attempt to explain; and not a proof that the writer was inspired, but that he studied the Book that we have long neglected; and, like Daniel, learned by the books of the Bible the time and the signs of the time.

Professor Bush of America writes, "We are now actually arrived at the very borders of that period which is to be signalized by the rounding up of the grand drama which has been for ages enacting in Christendom." Professor Robinson



says, "Before another half century shall have rolled away in the providence of God there will be seen revolutions in the Oriental mind, and over the world, of which no one has even a foreboding." (*Bib. Sac.* vol. ii. p. 212.) Arnold, one of the most cautious and discriminating of minds, says, (in *Mod. Hist.* p. 38,) "Modern history appears not only a step in advance of ancient history, but the last step; it appears to bear marks of the fullness of the time, as if there would be no future history beyond it. But without any presumptuous confidence—if there be any signs, however uncertain, that we are living in the latest period of the world's history, that no other races remain behind to perform what we have neglected, or to restore what we have ruined, then indeed the interest of modern history becomes intense."

Should the close of this age be now almost at our doors, should we be about to enter very soon upon a new and a nobler era, let us lift up our heads; our redemption draweth nigh. A new festal glory will then lighten every land, and gild the humblest home and the noblest palace with an unprecedented and unearthly splendour. And upon this earth of ours, weary with weeping, oppressed with the sufferings of her children, there will be kindled a warmth that will glow and increase until the household fires of time mingle

and expand into the sunshine of everlasting ages. And this poor world of ours, He that made it by His power, and redeemed it by His blood, will wrap in His warm love, and make a nobler, happier, more beautiful orb than when it came from His hands and He called all very good. We Christians have bright hopes, blessed expectancies. Come thunder, come lightning, come famine, come plague, come pestilence, come war, our footing is on the Rock of Ages; our safety is the pledge of heaven; our home is where there are joys at God's right hand, and pleasures for ever and for ever.

## IV.

### THE DRYING UP OF THE EUPHRATES.

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.”—REV. xvi. 12.

IN the wonderful chapter from which these words are taken there is a series of successive judgments poured out upon different localities of the great European world, each inflicting a specific judgment upon a specific portion of the earth. The word translated “vial” might be translated “cup” or “bowl;” it is in itself a symbol; there are no symbols that have not significance by their very nature, and this book is written in the language of symbol, or of hieroglyph; but with certain keys indicated in the volume, that enable us to unlock the mystery, decipher the hieroglyph, and reach a proximate idea at least of what is the mind of the Holy Spirit of God. The first vial or plague began to be poured out—as can be shown on grounds which it is unnecessary to recapitulate—when

the first 1260 years expired ; which era began, as almost every enlightened commentator has agreed, at 530, and terminated—(1260 added to 530)—in 1790. It was then that these plagues began to be poured out upon apostate Christendom, for such it then was ; but not on our own country, it being separated from the Ten Kingdoms by having renounced the Papacy at the Reformation, and appeared before the world, what, notwithstanding all its sins, it is still—a Protestant nation, not mixed up with the Ten Kingdoms, and not doomed to come under the judgments which they will soon experience. The first was poured out upon the earth, that is, the Roman earth, again represented by the Ten Kingdoms ;—its first sprinkling began at the great French Revolution in 1790 ; when men, corrupted, debased, infected to the core by the deadly teaching of the Jesuits, threw off all restraint, recoiled from all religion, and began the experiment which Robespierre was compelled to acknowledge to have been a failure—to work the world without God, and to keep men right without the sabbath. This vial was poured out upon the eldest daughter of the Church. If any wish to see the evidence of its results, let them read the intensely interesting History of Alison. Such history has more than the charms of romance, with nothing of its weakening

and debilitating tendency, and has everything that will instruct and make wise ;—I do not know a more magnificent commentary upon this chapter than that most graphic sketch given by Sir Archibald Alison of the French Revolution, beginning at 1790. And you will be struck as you read his volumes with what I think is so remarkable, the very expressions of the Apocalypse unconsciously on his part used, because most appropriate in themselves, to describe the awful scenes that took place during what they called “the baptisms” of Marat and Robespierre.

The next vial was poured out upon the sea. Read Alison’s sketch of the utter and continuous destruction of everything that the naval power and influence of Europe could put forth against our own country. The Nile, Trafalgar, and St. Vincent are our proofs. The third was poured out upon the rivers and fountains of waters ; that is, the different nations on the Danube, the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Po. History again is commentary ; if you trace now the third phasis of that Revolution, you will see that the banks of the Tiber, the Rhine, the Rhone, and every great river on the continent of Europe,—that is, the population on their banks,—were scourged and visited by the overwhelming judgments that then descended upon the earth. In

the next instance the angel poured out his vial, being the fourth, upon the sun, that is, the imperial power; "and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God; and they repented not." Now Elliott thinks, and I conceive justly, that this was the then imperial power that was dominant over all Europe; called by his soldiers "The Little Sun," Napoleon I. He was also called by his soldiers—from the peculiar and unprecedented effect with which he wielded musketry, and from the rolling fire of his artillery—"the fire-king;" as if the very words of the Apocalypse were undesignedly used by his soldiers to denote who he was. Read Alison's magnificent sketch of the Battle of the Pyramids. The finest cavalry that ever appeared upon earth, the Mameluke cavalry, came rushing onward as a whirlwind,—the very tramp of their hoofs making the earth shake,—but were met by the solid squares formed by those troops under the eye of Napoleon; and by "the ceaseless rolling fire" from every square in that formidable army, every saddle was emptied almost with the speed and splendour of a miracle, and the finest cavalry probably that ever appeared in Asia or in Europe was annihilated. In that terrible career

we find a specimen of the scorching fire of the Imperial Sun.

“The fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast;” that is, the metropolitan see of the Apostasy, or Papacy. The decrees of Schoenbrunn annihilated the temporal power of the Popedom. The Pope of that day was dragged at the chariot-wheels of Napoleon, was taken to Fontainebleau and made a prisoner, treated as a puppet, the Emperor making merry at his expense, and subsequently appointing a king of Rome; and literally and truly he so desolated the Papacy, that the old Pope and his Cardinals as they retired exclaimed, “*Consummatum est*,” “This is the end of all.” They anticipated the event; it was not yet; it was only another stage in the great drama that was passing before man.

Now we come to the sixth vial; the sixth vial was poured out years ago; but the sprinklings of the last mingle with the first sprinklings of the next, for each does not seem, judging from facts, to be finished till its successor is poured out and mingles with it. The sixth vial began at a period which I will by and by endeavour to specify; the seventh, as I believe, was poured out in 1848; but the effects of the sixth are still felt, because the effects of the sixth were not to be a blow struck and finished, but a process going on, like

a river drying up, gradually, progressively, one vial interlacing also with another for a long period, a process that requires time. Now let me show how this river denotes, and has been used to denote, the Turkish nation,—the head and metropolis of Mahometan power, whose waning is going on and now almost finished. I was exceedingly struck only last year on hearing statesmen, who did not seem to have studied this book very much, thus designating the Mahometan power ;—the present Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, for instance, I heard observe on the platform of Exeter Hall, that it was scarcely possible to doubt that the great river Euphrates was now almost dried up ; taking the very words of this prophecy and applying them, as he most justly and Scripturally did, to the waning or wasting of the Turco-Mahometan power. The reason of this river being used as the symbol of that dynasty or nation lies somewhat in this. A river is employed in common speech, in ordinary history, and in the Bible, to denote a people. For instance, we speak of the Thames, the Tiber, the Missouri, the Mississippi, the Rhine, the Ganges, to denote the nationalities or peoples that live upon their banks. Nothing is more common in ancient speech, and nothing more usual in modern phrase, than to call a



people by the name of the river on whose banks their chief capital is built. The Saracens, after their first irruption ceased, settled finally in Bagdad on the Euphrates. The children of Sarah, I may observe, are properly called Saracens; the children and descendants of Hagar are properly called Hagarenes. The Arabs and Ishmaelites were the descendants of Hagar the bond-woman; although they called themselves not Hagarenes, their real designation, which they think a discredit, but Saracens, or the children of the princess and the free-woman Sarah. They ought properly to be called in history Hagarenes, because the descendants of Hagar the bond-woman; they have, however, called themselves, and are called by others, Saracens, as if they were descended from Sarah the princess. These Saracens, after their first irruption, settled in Bagdad on the banks of the Euphrates; and from that very spot—Bagdad on the Euphrates—the Turks poured forth on Eastern Christendom like a mighty river, overflowing its banks and submerging the whole of the sunny plains of the East. Those who have read their history must well recollect that it was in 1063, or in the 11th century, that Alp Arslam, “the valiant lion,” crossed the Euphrates at the head of immense squadrons of Turkish horse. In the language

of Gibbon, one of the best commentators undesignedly upon the Apocalypse, "myriads of Turkish horsemen overspread the whole Greek Empire ; until at last Constantinople, the capital of the Empire, the mistress of the East, and the seat of a Christian see or patriarchate, fell before the forces of the Turks ; gunpowder and cannon on the largest scale having been then employed for the first time to reduce its formidable walls." For more than 400 years the Turks have been the possessors of Constantinople ; that is, from the year 1453 down to the year 1855, the present year. In other words, the Euphratean flood, or the Turkish nationality that started from the banks of the Euphrates, has overflowed all Greek Christendom, and submerged in its waters the Cross and Christianity ; and instead reflects from its bosom the mosque, the minaret, and the superstition of Mahomet the false prophet. You have, then, in the overspreading of that vast population, chiefly characterized as horsemen, the overflowing of the great river Euphrates. And you will recollect the singular statement in Revelation ix., where it is said, in describing this Turkish woe, that their power, or jurisdiction, or political power, was in their tails. It speaks of them being horsemen, myriads of horsemen ; and of their power being in their tails. This seems

so extraordinary that one is puzzled at first sight. We know the power of an emperor is his diadem—I mean his diadem is the symbol of it; the symbol of royal power is a crown, the sign or symbol of a nobleman is his coronet. But how this new power could be described as existent in their tails seems very strange, until we open Gibbon, and we there find that in a great battle the Turks lost their standard. Instantly their chief leader cut off his horse's tail, and hoisted it on a pole; and the horse-tail became the symbol of the Turkish power, and it is so to this day;—a Pasha with two tails, or one tail, or three tails, being the very Apocalyptic symbol perpetuated in modern history, and so furnishing a vivid illustration of the prediction of God's word. This great flood overspread the whole of Eastern Christendom; and for 400 years has kept possession of Constantinople and the East.

Now in the Book of Daniel, which is in some respects as clear as the Apocalypse,—neither being as plain as history, but both opening up more and more the nearer the end come;—we read that 2300 years should start from some point in his day, at the end of which the Turkish or Turco-Mahometan power, seen by him in the distant future, should begin to wane; for it is that power that he describes in terms so graphic

that it is scarcely possible to mistake it ; so much so that were Daniel's picture of the Mahometan power advertised in Europe, I am quite sure that our brave allies or ourselves would instantly seize upon Turkey as meant thereby. What was the commencement of the 2300 years ? We find from certain incidental expressions that Daniel calculated from the meridian glory of the Persian empire and the splendid march of Xerxes, B. C. 480, when it reached its very culminating greatness. Now if you will date 2300 years at that period, it will bring you down exactly to the year 1820. If we interpret the prophecy of Daniel right—and I showed the elements of the calculation in a previous Lecture, and do not therefore repeat them now—the river Euphrates should begin to dry up in 1820 ; or, translated into literal language, the Mahometan power in Europe should then begin to consume and waste away, till it finally disappear. When we examine the facts of the case, we find history justifying prophecy. The sixth vial, I have shown, from giving a slight sketch of the previous vials, must bring us down somewhere to that period, namely, 1820. I showed that the fifth was poured out on the seat of the Beast, and therefore must have been in the early period of the 19th century ; and thus the sixth must be the next stage in

the current of that century; and in the next place the end of Daniel's period brings us down to 1820. Is there any evidence that the Mahometan power previous to 1820 was strong; and that subsequent to 1820, was not struck down at a blow, for this is not the law, but *εξηραυθη*, was dried up, as the pool evaporates under the sunshine? I open the Annual Register of that very year, and I find these remarkable words: "The Ottoman Empire at the beginning of this year, 1820, had reached its meridian strength, free from all foreign invasion, and possessed of perfect peace at home." This is the statement of the condition of the Mahometan Empire in Europe in the spring of 1820. Towards the autumn of that very year we find it begin to dry up. The Greek insurrection broke out in the autumn of 1820; Ali Pasha rose against the Sultan; in rapid succession Northern Greece, the isles of the Ægean Sea, the Danubian Provinces, emerged in succession from beneath the Euphratean flood; or, in other words, became dislocated from the Mahometan domination in Europe. In 1827, a little further on, the Turco-Egyptian fleet was destroyed; reforms began in the very constitution of Turkey—reforms that in her case were literal revolutions; because by her very nature, and laws, and economy, she is incapable of such;

—earthquakes, pestilence, fevers, conflagrations, famines, year by year, have so wasted European Turkey, that Lamartine was forced to make the condensed but expressive remark, "Turkey is dying for want of Turks." That statesman and literary man, looking with an impartial eye, impartially witnesses to the fact that the great river Euphrates had been long drying up; he is constrained to say, "Turkey is dying for want of Turks." If we come down a little later, or to 1855, we shall see that the last pools in the almost deserted channel of the Euphrates are now nearly evaporated in the sunshine. This very year the remaining waters in the channel of the Euphrates are almost gone. France and England went forth as became them to spread the shadow of their magnificent fleets over the Euphratean flood, to intercept the keen heat that might evaporate it too soon. But what has happened? Our endeavours to help Turkey have only precipitated more speedily its decay, not by our fault, but on laws and principles higher than statesmen naturally can be expected to recognise or act upon. For what are the present and prospective results and consequences of this war? The property of the mosques has been already confiscated; the Sheikul-Islam, or, as we should call him, the Archbishop of Canterbury, has

been deposed ; and Mahometanism at this moment, whether Russia is to triumph or to fail, is equally an effete, exhausted, and gone thing.

But the best proof of all this will not be our arbitrary explanation of prophecy, but contemporary facts, and such proofs will tend to fix the epoch at which we are arrived, and show that it is not without good grounds that we fix our proximate position at this moment in reference to the end of this age. I have already intimated that of all commentators upon prophecy at this time the newspaper is the best ; and therefore I look upon a London daily newspaper now as I never looked upon it before. It collects the facts of history, and the proofs of the fulfilment of prophecy, and the writers in the Times, the Morning Herald, the Morning Post, the Daily News, sit down and faithfully and graphically record what they see ; and we in our studies compare what they have recorded with what God has written 1800 years before ; and we find they are the unconscious amanuenses of the fulfilment of truth, and so far voices sounding in the desert of the world, " Thy word, O God, is truth." Let me give you some evidences of this. First, I quote from the Times newspaper, Jan., 1855 :

" I should think the population of this immense district, bounded on one side by a straight line

drawn from Varna to Rustchuk, and on the other by the Danube and the Black Sea, has been diminished at least by one-half by the events of last summer. If I said that two-thirds of the Mussulmans had disappeared, I am certain I should not be guilty of exaggeration. It is an important fact, and well worthy of the attention of those whose duty it will be to make arrangements for the preservation of the Ottoman empire at the close of the present troubles, that the Turks are fast disappearing from Bulgaria, and that there is every likelihood that fifty years hence they will in this province be *rare aves*, without a shred of their ancient power and influence. During the whole of last summer a continued stream of emigration poured southward from the towns and villages on the Danube, Tultscha, Matchin, Silistria, Rustchuk, Baltschik, and Bazardschik. The roads were covered with processions of men, women, and children, with their flocks and herds, and household utensils, wandering in search of an abode where they could enjoy greater peace and security. The great majority of these passed the Balkan, and have never returned, and never will return. Numbers directed their march on Adrianople and on Constantinople, and have thence passed over into Asia. The invariable reply they gave to questions touching their motive for quitting their homes was, "The Giaours are coming." Where they meant to settle they knew not; but their instinct had told them that they could not maintain themselves and their religion and customs in a neighbourhood in which the Christian population was rapidly gaining the ascendancy,



and which Christian armies are continually menacing. The few that still remain are so outnumbered by the enemies of their faith, and feel themselves, as it were, so isolated, that I am persuaded this emigration will be resumed on the return of the fine weather, and will never wholly cease until the turban will be rarely seen on this side the Balkan. Everything Turkish bears marks of decay. Ruined and deserted mosques are now no uncommon sight; fountains dried up and dilapidated houses abound on all the roads. I cannot help thinking that a remark made to me the other day by a gentleman who knows European Turkey well is perfectly correct, that the Turks, instead of being encamped here as so many imagine, have merely occupied it by the advanced posts, and these extensive migrations are but in reality the falling back of these posts on the main body, which, it must be admitted, has never left Asia. Be this as it may, the facts I have recounted are not to be disputed."

A correspondent of the same Journal, writing February, 1855:

"Every day that sees the strife continue, and the capital of the Ottoman occupied by newly arriving forces, witnesses also the weakening of the independent action of the Porte, and the substitution for it of the will of the allies. It is necessary for the safety of Europe, and the final settlement of this question, that the influence of the West should continue to increase. The time has not come for an abandonment of the position gained by so many sacrifices.

In this lies the chief cause of difference with the ally whom we protect. Now that immediate danger from Russia is past, and the enthusiasm of a few months since has died away, or been drowned in blood and losses, the feelings of the Turkish race have been much changed. Every other impulse is now swallowed up in the desire to get rid of the Western armies. The terrible image which is ever before the eyes of Mussulmans is the elevation of the Christian races to an equality with themselves. This they believe the West will insist upon, and they have a not unnatural feeling that the presence of two armies in their territory will give them little choice in the principle or details of any changes. No one who has any acquaintance with the Turks can doubt their utter discouragement as to the result of the present occupation, and of their wish, at any cost, to bring it to a close. The feeling is deepest among those in power, who have most to lose. If, when peace is concluded, the allies should urge a further stay of their armies on Turkish soil, it is most certain that the project will be opposed with all the desperate pertinacity which is characteristic of the race, and which has so often baffled the most vigorous diplomatsists, armed with the justest arguments. As to the future, the world may be assured that the Turk will never call in allies again.

“A man so ambitious and far-sighted as the Russian Emperor will not be slow in turning to his own advantage the distrust which may arise between the Ottoman and his somewhat cavalier protectors.

There are already symptoms of the course of policy on which he has resolved. Since the struggle before Sebastopol has begun, the so-called Russian party among the Turks has gained no little strength. This is, of course, not a party with any real predilection for Russia, or one which wishes to see the Czar at Constantinople, but it consists chiefly of the least advanced and most fanatical of the wealthier Pashas. By a Russian party is meant those who think it most prudent to lean on Muscovite protection, and to allow the Czar a right of interference and the chief voice in the councils of the empire, through a confident hope that he will, for his own interest, preserve the present system, at least during their own time. The Turk has now ceased to look beyond the present generation. The absence of the idea of family encourages the state of feeling which is expressed in the phrase, "After me the deluge." The great body of the richer Turks are childless: their wives constantly practise abortion, since with this sensual race a woman who has had a child generally loses the affections of her husband. The consequence is, that these men look only to their own time, and fancy that Russian ascendancy will give them during the next twenty years the tranquillity and authority which they have always enjoyed, while the reforming and humanitarian West will destroy the system under which they have become rich, and raise to a troublesome equality the energetic races whom they are beginning to fear. The Czar will now *pose* himself as the protector of the Mussulman."

These able writers graphically describe or paraphrase the Apocalyptic symbol. "Gradually the waters that overflowed its banks and rushed over Eastern Christendom in Europe are receding back into Asia, where its proper spring and fountain is;" or, "the great river Euphrates is being dried up." I give another extract, from the Standard, of May, 1855.

"We never joined in the belief, and have always thought that the prophecy predicting the downfall of the Mahomedan empire referred to the abolition of Mahomedanism, and not to the subjugation of that people which has hitherto professed it. If this view of the question be taken, we may hope that the vaticinations of Daniel are about to be fulfilled indeed. Human power is weak; but it is difficult to imagine what is to overthrow the Ottoman government, now that it and its friends are victorious, and its only enemy is hardly put to defend himself. Passing events, however, point most strongly to the extinction of Ottoman barbarism and bigotry and ignorance, and with them, it is to be hoped, of Mahomedanism. The reform party in Turkey is gaining strength, while among the reformers polygamy is abolished, and the one wife to which they confine themselves is introduced into society, and in all respects treated on the same footing as an European lady. The good effect of this improvement is apparent in the humanity with which the Turkish women have voluntarily set themselves to make shirts and other

garments for the soldiers of the allies, and in a large patriotic fund which has been raised at Constantinople. The Haratch (a tax paid by the Christian subjects of the Porte for the privilege of keeping their head on their shoulders) is abolished, and though it was merely, in the nature of our late tax upon light, a means of raising money, its abolition is a concession to public opinion, and shows a desire to conciliate the Christian portion of the Turkish population. The accursed Giaour is to be admitted to the rank of colonel in the army and to other honours which have hitherto been the prerogative of true believers. A board of education is in process of formation, and one-third of it will consist of Christians—a circumstance the significance of which we need not enlarge upon. The Sultan has allowed the erection of a Protestant church in the heart of Syria. The Greek families, expelled during the late insurrection, are recalled, and a treaty of commerce between the courts of Athens and Constantinople is set on foot. These improvements show that a spirit of liberality prevails among the masses of the people. It is a mistake to suppose the Turkish rule purely and securely despotic. Many governments called constitutional are less controlled by public opinion, and Abdul Medjid would never dare to make concessions to the Christians which were not sanctioned by the majority of his Mahomedan subjects."

In the Times we read—

"The Turk and Christian appear to have agreed in thinking Western occupation an intolerable thral-

dom, and the Turk is more discontented than the Christian, since, not being a trader, he has no hope of sharing in the gains which an influx of strangers brings with it. The Turks see the diminished consequence of their own rulers and themselves; they see every building of size and beauty in the capital passing into the hands of their energetic allies; and they look upon their country as already conquered, and the worst calamity they had to fear has already come upon them. The enthusiasm against Russia has quite passed away. If Nicholas came to Constantinople he could not do more than the allies have done. But Nicholas is 30 or perhaps 50 years from Constantinople, while the allies already hold the capital and have established themselves in some of the strongest points of the Sultan's territory. It is no uncommon thing for them to discuss the partition which they believe to be approaching, and lately an idea has prevailed among men by no means belonging to the populace, that a treaty for the dismemberment of their country has been actually agreed upon by the great Powers. Little things make a great impression upon them. They are much mortified that their soldiers are obliged to salute the French and English officers, while the sentinels of the allies pay no attention to the greatest Pasha. The naval barracks have been cleared of their Mussulman tenants, and the Russian prisoners installed there. This the Turks look upon as an intolerable insult, and assume as a proof that even the enemy whom the allies came to combat is more respected than the true believer.

"I have been informed that in the tenth century a prophecy was current in Constantinople, credited by the vulgar, that the Russians, in the last days, would become masters of the city. It was said to have been inscribed secretly, by an unknown hand, on an equestrian bronze statue situated in a public square of the city, called Taurus. The prophecy itself is an unquestionable fact. It is asserted by Gibbon, on the authority of several ancient authors—Nicatus, Choniates, Codinus, &c. Would it not be remarkable if the prophetic character claimed for the inscription should be confirmed, after the lapse of nine centuries, by the events of the present war in the East ? "

A correspondent of the Times writes from Constantinople—

"As a matter of curiosity, I may mention that the Russians are making an active search in every Jewish community for a Hebrew work, which it is said is exceedingly old, and amongst other things contains predictions and vaticinations of the present Russo-Turkish war. This work, it is added, has been found here at Brody, and bears the title in Hebrew, 'God's Light for the Wise.' "

To these extracts I might add many more. The evidence is most complete that in this very year Mahometanism in Turkey is almost extinct. The Turks in their own mode of living contain the prophecy of their extinction. The indolent habits of the Turk, his excesses in opium and

tobacco, fathers without paternal feelings, and mothers without maternal affection, are daily rendering the deaths in every city nearly twice the number of the births ; and did not the rural population supply the waste places, the cities of Turkey in Europe would be speedily altogether depopulated. We notice, too, not only this exhaustion of the race, but the extinction of all that makes Turkey Turkish. The most stringent laws of the Koran are at this moment broken. The renunciation of Islamism by one who once a Christian had adopted it, and now renounces it, is by the Koran death ; but by the law of the Sultan, thus set up in opposition to the Koran, it is no longer death. The recent burial of the Giaours—that is, Christians—in the sacred burial-places of the Moslem, has utterly shocked the old dynasty ; and the intermixture of races in eating, drinking, in the field of battle, in the privations of the tent, in the service of the trenches—all have alarmed the ancient Moslem, and created a horror of us and the West.

“ The Christian sects, in the Ottoman empire are the following :—Greeks, Greek-Catholic, Armenian, Armenian-Evangelist (the most hopeful of them all), Nestorians, Nestorian-Catholic or Chaldean, Syrian, Syrian-Catholic, Latin, Croatian, Maronite, Copt, and Abyssinian. Of the first Churches recognised



by the Porte there are the Greek and Armenian Churches. They have their agent at Constantinople. The Nestorians and Koords have as yet none. In like manner the Armenian and Syrian Churches in Syria have their civil affairs managed by the Armenian Patriarch. The Croatian Churches in Turkey in Europe are Roman Catholics, inclusive of Bosnians, Albanians, and Bulgarians; and to all these, within the last twenty years, has the Porte granted recognised agents to conduct their civil affairs. Lord Cowley in 1847 obtained a vizierial letter from the Porte, *confirming, facilitating, and securing* the privileges of Protestants in their civil and ecclesiastical affairs, and placing them under the direct protection of the British embassy. The American missionaries, who are more numerous there than the British missionaries, thanked the present Lord Stratford for this *substantial relief from persecution, and for this liberty of conscience*. And so lately as 24th October, 1850, a firman in favour of Protestants was granted, which is to the following effect:—‘Whereas the Christian subjects of my empire, who are Protestants, suffer under some difficulties and inconveniences, owing to their not having yet been placed under a separate and special jurisdiction, and to the natural inability of the Patriarch and chief of the sect which they have abandoned, to administer their affairs; and whereas, conformably to the royal solicitude, it is against my royal pleasure that any of them should be exposed to trouble, it is my royal will that for the Protestants, now forming a separate communion, measures be taken for insuring the proper adminis-

tration of their affairs, and for enabling them to live in peace and security.' When will the Pope of Rome, or the Czar—the Pope of the Græco-Russian Church, grant similar toleration to Protestants in their dominions? Accordingly, after this an agent for the Protestants was appointed, chosen by themselves, and attached to the department of the Minister of Police. He keeps an account of births, deaths, and marriages, grants passports, and transacts at the Porte, or elsewhere, by memorials and otherwise, sealed with his seal, all the business connected with Protestants in the Turkish empire.

“So much for Turkish toleration in matters ecclesiastical and pertaining to the conscience. In these respects it is greatly in advance of St. Petersburg and Rome.

“In civil matters it is equally free. The tariff settled between Great Britain and Turkey, October 31, 1850, is of a most liberal kind to our commerce and navigation. It is to continue till 1855, March 13, and under it British merchants and British interests will secure favour which they would never enjoy did the Czar command the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus.

“Politically, commercially, ecclesiastically, therefore, it is the policy of Britain to aid the Turk; and, while his days are numbered in Europe, it is more imperatively the interest of Britain, looking to her Indian possessions, to see that, on the removal of the Turk, Russia at least shall not *permanently* be tolerated to occupy the Sultan's throne. For a time he *may* do so; but, if Britain saw it to be her duty to

pull down in the Peninsula and at Waterloo the French Emperor, much more will it be her duty, not only to *herself*, but to *humanity and to God*, to dispute every step of the Czar's approach, and to watch his every movement, till at length she becomes the centre of a world-wide alliance, eventually to overthrow the power of the north at the close of the struggle.

"We have said there are hopeful symptoms in the Greek Church for the Christianity of the future. Let us now mention some of the religious tenets of the Evangelical Armenian Church in Turkey. The American missionaries are the best informed on the subject. A translation of the Armenian Confession of Faith appeared in the Armenian report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions for 1846. Here is the Græco-Evangelical Armenian Confession of Faith; it is purely evangelical, and is, as we have said, a good symptom of hope in the Greek Church for the future."

The Rev. Mr. Boyd, in a very excellent Lecture descriptive of his visit to Turkey, makes the following remarks illustrative of this very vial in 1853.

"If the city bears upon it these stamps of hopeless barbarism, the country around it by no means contradicts the impression produced. During a very short sojourn at Constantinople it was of course out of my power to see much of places beyond it. But I could hardly have anticipated, in the immediate neighbourhood of a great town, so much desolation and in-

activity as a single day's excursion presented. It was not simply that the inland scenery fell immeasurably short of the heights and valleys of the Bosphorus, but that deadness appeared to be the one character of the tracts through which I passed. Not a mile from Pera, one plunges into long wastes of nearly barren land—at least, land which bore no trace of cultivation. There was a total absence of smiling cottages, and comfortable homesteads, and industrious peasants. Instead of these, the eye ranged over miles of soil destitute of all vegetation, except that of stunted burnt brushwood, which crackled crisply under the horses' feet, and suggested the idea of a prairie ground, over which the hot blast of a conflagration had swept. But the most striking feature was the paucity of population. This, it appears from the accounts of travellers, is not peculiar to the present times. Lamartine in his *Travels* remarks that 'Turkey is perishing for want of Turks.' Dr. Walsh, who travelled overland from Constantinople in 1828, states, 'If we had been at the same distance from the ruins of Palmyra, we could not have witnessed more silence and desolation. The usual villas which are scattered near the suburbs of a great city are not to be seen, and the crowds which generally throng the entrance nowhere to be met with. A large team of buffaloes dragging an aruba, or a solitary horseman, scarcely visible on the horizon, were the only objects that indicated the existence of social life close by the great city.' *Altogether, decay seems to have written herself in characters so legible upon Turks and Turkey, upon natures and institutions, as to suggest the con-*

clusion that such a people cannot be expected long to maintain a national existence; and perhaps to force upon the mind the question, whether it be for the interests of humanity and civilization that they should be allowed to retain possessions which are clearly misplaced in their hands."—*Turkey and the Turks*, pp. 19, 20.

"A retrospect of these successive struggles in which the Porte has been engaged, and a sense of the inconvenience, if not danger, to which all Europe is exposed by their perpetuation, press on all thoughtful men the question,—*What is to become of Turkey?* All feel that her position is so insecure, her powers of resistance so doubtful, and a right adjustment of her difficulties so necessary to continental tranquillity, that, some time or other, the consideration of her Future will have to be entertained, with a view to some permanent settlement of her prospects. In the East and elsewhere men are speculating on the chances of a partition of the Empire among the leading Powers, the creation of several independent states, or the establishment of a Christian Kingdom in her stead. There are some who conceive that notwithstanding all her misgovernment, her misapplication of resources, and her confessedly uncivilized condition, there is yet in Turkey so much dormant power and undeveloped greatness, that she has only to be sustained for some time longer, to present the aspect of an improving and independent nation. It may be presumptuous for one who has had but scanty opportunity for examining such a question, to hazard the utterance of an opinion. But I confess it appeared to me that

there was nothing in Turkish character or habits to warrant such an expectation. In the nature of the Turk there seems to be an ineradicable indolence, a lazy indifference to advantages, a sensual contentment with low comforts, an inaptitude for the pursuits of industry, an inability to task his mind with the perplexities of calculation and commerce, an impotency to meet the demands on time and strength which enterprise requires, a total absence of that patient perseverance ever allied to success,—all which appeared directly contradictory of the soundness of such anticipations. It is true that the Turks are equal to great exertions, when under the pressure of fanaticism or impulse; but, with the single exception of fear, there does not seem to be any pursuit in which that convulsive energy can long sustain itself. And it is yet to be seen how long the undoubted military ardour which at present animates the nation will continue at blood heat. The things that give wealth to a nation, such as the cultivation of natural resources, enlarged intercourse with other countries, and the extension of commerce, are in other hands. Probably, if the Greek and Armenian were removed from Turkey the empire would expire of poverty. Besides, all the institutions, religious and social, appear to be opposed to the possibility of a great national development. Let progress and improvement exhibit themselves as they may in other countries, they are of little value in the eyes of the Turk, if the Koran does not recommend them. Acting in servile submission to its laws and spirit, they are as effectually restricted from any advance built upon

change, as is the Church of Rome by the adoption of the tenet of infallibility. Polygamy has destroyed the sacredness and the purity of domestic life, and converted that which ought to be home into an establishment for the indulgence of sensuality. Infanticide prevails to an extent of which we have no conception; for in the smallest villages of Turkey are to be found, pursuing their dreadful trade openly and avowedly, the professors of child-destruction, whose business it is to prevent any addition to the family of two or three, by extinguishing life as soon as it has manifested its immature existence. Immorality, gross and unspeakable, is more habitual there than natural profligacy in other countries. Education is little understood and less valued. The internal decorations of the Seraglio show that the Fine Arts have no place in Turkish estimation; while the absence of manufactures on a large scale, and marked by modern improvements, equally testifies that the Useful Arts meet with but scanty encouragement. Possessors of a country of vast extent, of incalculable resources, of unbounded fertility, enjoying the physical advantage of mountains, plains, and rivers, the Turks are numerically wasting away."

We have thus collected the testimonies of most dispassionate writers. If Turkey had been overthrown by a blow; if another nation had supplanted or superseded it; then the figure in the Apocalypse would not have been applicable. But this gradual waning, this progressive ex-

haustion, is so accurately set forth by the symbol of a river drying up in its channel till a few scattered pools are all that remain, that one cannot but see a coincidence as remarkable as it is accurate, indicating triumphantly its application to the Turkish or Mahometan power.

But suppose that Turkey ceases to be a nation or is destroyed ; that its population, the Mahometan population, die out, or retreat across the Bosphorus to their own original place whence the flood started in 1053 ; what then will be the result ? I answer, contemporaneous with this exhaustion of Turkey, or rather this depopulation of Turkey, this sinking and submerging of all that is peculiar to it as a Mahometan nationality, there is emerging, day by day, an enlightened and increasing Christian population. You will find in the reports that have been given of the progress of Christianity in the East some most interesting illustrations of this. I have lately read several recent proofs of this in the Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions for 1854, and a most interesting statement it is. In this Report they give an account of their missions in the East, especially in Turkey ; and, with many others, they state the following facts. In their mission to the Armenians they have “ 12 stations, 17 out-stations, 26 mission-



aries, 31 female assistant missionaries, 17 native preachers, and 40 native helpers." The missionaries write,—

"The statistics of book and tract distribution, by an oversight, have not been given. It is stated that the call for the publications of the mission from the interior has been considerably greater than in any previous year. More than one thousand copies of the new edition of the modern Armenian Bible have gone from the magazine into different parts of the country during the year. The sales in Constantinople have been somewhat diminished by the war. The significance of the following statement will be understood, and is a cause for devout thanksgiving unto God: 'From almost every part of our field,' say the brethren at Constantinople, 'there has been a demand for the Bible in the Turkish language; and we have reason to believe that the Scriptures are now read by Turks more than at any other period.' Twelve colporteurs have been regularly employed in the Constantinople field, and a considerably large number in the fields of other stations. Of the former, five have laboured in Constantinople and its suburbs, two in Nicomedia, one in Ada-bazar, one in Baghchejùk, one in Broosa, one in Rodosto, and one in Adrianople."

In Constantinople they have three Protestant churches; and this long before England awakened the other day to propose building one. During the last year alone they have received five

new communicants from the Turks; the number of members is 114; and the whole number worshipping within these three churches—I admit a small one according to our calculations—is 239. Then they state that in Constantinople, Broussa, Smyrna, &c., they have fifteen churches; 54 additional communicants received last year; 395 communicants in all; and nearly 500 as the congregation, selected out of the Eastern population, and now worshipping in them; that is, at this moment.

Mr. Goodell, we read, has commenced a Turkish service on the Sabbath. “The blessed gospel,” he writes, “I have never preached apparently with such power as I have since my return to the East.”

From every great town in Turkey in Europe there are most encouraging tidings in the Report.

A Bible Society meeting was held at Constantinople, at which Lord Stratford de Redcliffe presided.

The following extract is very interesting :

“A distinguished Christian traveller from England recently put the question to the American missionaries here, whether the statement made by Mr. Layard in Parliament, that there are more than *forty towns and villages in Turkey in which are Protestant congregations, is strictly true?* This led to the writ-

ing down of a list of names of places, and the cheering fact was established, that in more than fifty towns and villages in this empire there are Protestant assemblies for Divine worship on every Lord's day! The largest of these congregations is that at Aintab, about three days N. E. from Aleppo, where there are more than 700 Protestants, and the smallest may perhaps not number more than three or four souls. But yet in all these different places the Word of God has entered, and some souls are found who, we may hope, are His spiritual worshippers. And besides these, who have openly avowed themselves as Protestants, risking all the consequences, there are known to be thousands among the Armenians, in the capital and throughout the interior of Turkey, who are really Protestant in sentiment, though not sufficiently moved by religious truth to impel them to take an open stand for the gospel before the world. Now, may we not reasonably hope that all this preparation is to be followed by a glorious completion? Twenty-five years ago not a single Protestant could be found among all the natives of this land, and Protestantism was either wholly unknown, or, where known at all, it was considered as synonymous with infidelity and Atheism. And, alas! the careless and worldly lives of most of the few foreign Protestants resident here at that time, gave too strong a confirmation to this original Jesuit calumny. In this respect, also, there has been a very pleasing change, and we have now serious-minded Christians living here, from England and America, and from various parts of the Continent, letting their

light shine on all around. Just look, for a moment, at the following comparative statistics:—

Number of Protestant clergymen labouring in			
Constantinople and its suburbs in	. . .	1830,	0
Ditto	ditto	. . . 1854,	19
Number of Protestant sermons preached on			
every Sabbath in different languages in ditto		1830,	0
Ditto	ditto	. . . 1854,	26
Number of Protestant schools in ditto			
		. . . 1830,	0
Ditto	ditto	. . . 1854,	14

“You will understand that those statistics refer to Constantinople and its immediate environs alone. In the whole Turkish Empire (including Constantinople) there are at the present time not fewer than SIXTY-FIVE PROTESTANT PREACHERS! And I have another pleasing and most encouraging fact to state, which is, that although among these there are representatives of several different branches of the Protestant Church, yet so far as I know, without, at present, a single exception, they are all labouring harmoniously for one and the same great object. For example, at the metropolis from which I now write, among the nineteen clergymen mentioned, there are Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Lutherans, and one Waldensian, and yet but one spirit seems to pervade them all; and they often come together for prayer and conference in regard to the great work in which they are engaged.”

We have in these interesting facts evidence that with the drying up of the Euphrates, and the waning and wasting of the Mahometan power,

there is emerging an enlightened and Christian population ; and that these have been the results of Protestant missionary aggression. But it has been also noticed that the Armenian patriarchs, and bishops, and priests, are day by day giving up their distinctive superstitions, and becoming more enlightened in the knowledge of God's holy word. These are all evidences most encouraging, for they indicate that when Turkey becomes extinct as a national power there may be erected on its ruins a nationality, a far more powerful obstruction to Russian aggression than an effete and worthless and effeminate race. The Mahometans themselves, it is said, regard the duration of their hold of Eastern Christendom as now very short indeed.

A very remarkable anticipation of all that is now taking place was given by Napoleon Buonaparte, of which I dare say most of you have heard. He said at St. Helena—and it shows how great sagacity sees often further into the future than ordinary minds, and than the highest genius ; nay, sometimes guesses what inspiration alone can definitely and certainly declare. Great intellect occasionally infers so accurately the issues of events, that its anticipations look almost like prophecies. This great man—great but not good—said forty years ago,—“ In the natural course

of things, in a few years Turkey must fall to Russia. The greatest part of her population are Greeks, who, you may say, are Russians. The Powers it would injure—and who could oppose it—are England, France, Prussia, and Austria. Now as to Austria, it will be very easy for Russia to engage her assistance by giving her Servia, and other provinces bordering upon the Austrian dominions, reaching near to Constantinople. The only hypothesis that France and England may ever be allied with sincerity, will be in order to prevent this. But even this alliance will not avail. France, England, and Prussia united cannot prevent it. Russia and Austria can at any time effect it. Once mistress of Constantinople, Russia gets all the commerce of the Mediterranean, becomes a great naval power, and God only knows what may happen.” It looks almost as if he had been reading the book to which I shall direct attention in a subsequent Lecture—the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel; where Russia is most graphically described. He continues, “Russia quarrels with England, marches off to India an army of 70,000 good soldiers, which to Russia is nothing, and 100,000 *canaille*, Cossacks and others, and England loses India. Above all the other Powers, Russia is the most to be feared, especially by you. Her soldiers are braver than

the Austrians, and she has the means of raising as many as she pleases. In bravery the French and English are the only ones to be compared to them. All this I foresaw. I see into futurity further than others, and I wanted to establish a barrier against those barbarians by re-establishing the kingdom of Poland, and putting Poniatowski at the head of it as king ; but your *inconcilables* of ministers would not consent. A hundred years hence I shall be praised, and Europe, especially England, will lament that I did not succeed. When they see the finest countries in Europe over-run and a prey to those northern barbarians, they will say, ' Napoleon was right.' Here is literally and strictly an echo of the prophetic record ; an evidence that great genius and sagacity almost touch upon prophecy.

Providence, we repeat, is writing in the page of the modern newspaper the fulfilment of ancient Apocalyptic predictions. All that is distinctive of Mahometanism and Turkey in Europe is rapidly disappearing. The paddle-wheel beats white the waters of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. The electric telegraph—that sensitive nerve of the earth—connects Constantinople, Varna, Sebastopol, and London ; till we can hear almost the boom of the cannon on the ramparts echoing in the Cabinet of St. James's. The

railway appears on the shore of the inhospitable Euxine, or, as the word would imply now, hospitable Euxine; soon to spread its network of iron over all the beautiful provinces around Constantinople; and to string the bright villages on its dark thread from the Rhine to the Danube, and to the uttermost parts of the east and west. The rapid consumption of the Moslem population; the gathering of all nations as if to celebrate its funeral obsequies; the cry of the Muezzin becoming fainter, and almost spent, as it is tremblingly uttered from the distant minaret; the waning of the Crescent till the mere rim or edge of it is visible in the Turkish firmament; are all proofs that a great epoch in prophecy is fulfilled: they seem to echo what God predicted. "It is done; thy words are truth."

These facts indicate that we are at least past the commencement of the sixth vial, and render it highly probable that we are entered on the seventh. The unclean spirits have entered Cabinet, Congress, Divan, Synod, Convocation, and Conference. Priestly ambition, Popish apostasy, infidel rationalism, seem to have been gathering all the nations of the earth to the last struggle. And what a state of perplexity are all nations in! Our people blame our rulers; our rulers probably blame the people. Great systems of Adminis-



trative Reform are started, and great changes are threatened. What is all this? It is poor man labouring under a malady he knows not, and trying by all sorts of empiricism to arrest the current, to resist the sure word of prophecy, or to prevent what must in the fulness of the time be completely fulfilled. The present conflict in the Crimea is the opening act of a tragedy the most solemn that has ever happened in Christendom. Watch and wait and see if it be not so. The probability is, as I shall show, that Russia will be beaten back for a little; but my conviction is—and that does not touch our duties—that while this nation is to be spared and kept clear of the devastating judgments, Russia will eventually march through Europe and sweep all before it; and finish its career where prophecy predicts it will finish it—in the plains of Palestine, and in the great struggle that restores the Jew to his country, Israel to its home. That would not and may not affect our duties. No prophecy has anything to do with our duties. These are taken from God's precepts, our hopes are gathered from God's prophecies. If I believed that this dispensation is to end next year, I should go on with the duties that belong to me as if the world were to last for ever. My Great Commander in the skies bids each stand in his

place; the sentinel at his post, the watchman on his beat, the sailor on the deck, the soldier on the field, the mother amid her family, the minister in his pulpit, the people in their pews. Duties are ours to the last moment; our great business is to do them. God will fulfil the prophecies; let us not try to accomplish what He has reserved as his own supreme and intransferable prerogative. And therefore nothing that I can see, nothing that I can establish, in reference to the future, must touch, in the least degree, our instant and our lasting duties.

If it be the sixth vial that has now all but passed away, what a solemn thought—it is in the interval between the sixth and the seventh that our Lord says, “Behold, I come as a thief.” Not it is then the day of his advent, for it is under the seventh; but it is the warning sound then given. The growing, spreading, preaching of the second advent is the evidence throughout the earth that the voice in heaven, “I come as a thief,” has for several years been re-echoed from earth, “Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly.”

“The bells of time are ringing changes fast:  
Grant, Lord, that each fresh peal may usher in  
An era of advancement, that each change  
Prove an effectual, lasting, happy gain.”

We have thus traced the drying up of Mahometanism ; secondly, the awakening of dead Churches ; thirdly, the wasting of all that is peculiar to Mahometan and Moslem Turkey ; and, lastly, the spread of the gospel amid the fair and sunny land of the East. And what a blessed prospect, that in the channel in which Euphrates has been dried up and wasted away, there will roll that river whose streams make glad the city of our God ; that in the Mosque, where the only voice is now, " Great is God, and Mahomet is his prophet ; " there shall be heard those grand sounds, " The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee. The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise thee. The noble army of Martyrs praise thee. Thou art the King of glory, O Christ." What a blessed hope, and what a joyful anticipation, that the moral glory, not of the crucifix, but of Christ and him crucified, shall absorb the last rays of the now waning and almost extinguished Crescent. It is matter for great thankfulness at the close and consummation of national sacrifices and toils, that there is increasing daily in Constantinople, in Adrianople, in Pera, around the Bosphorus, the Dardanelles, and parts of the Black Sea where even apostolic feet have been, a living, Scrip-

tural Christianity, making a people strong ; for no people stand so strong or feel their hearts heave so holily, as they that know in whom they have believed, and that He is able to keep what they have committed to Him against that day. The waning of the Crescent will only be the waxing brighter and brighter of the Sun of Righteousness. Amid all shocks, vicissitudes, changes, convulsions, earthquakes, pestilence, plague, and famine, the Bible is safe ; Christianity is safe ; the soul of the humblest Christian is as safe as if it were already in Paradise and in the bosom of God. The least Beatitude in the 5th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel will outlive the largest Pyramid of all the Pharaohs ; the least truth that God has written has more of immortality, eternity, and omnipotence in it, than the mightiest works that man has ever raised.

In the prospect of times of trouble, and of great changes, I ask none to give up their post, to retreat from duties ; but I urge all to have their hearts more than ever where Christ our treasure is. And if our hearts be with Him, if our trust be in His precious blood, if our hopes spring from His Cross, if our prospects of glory be founded on the purchase of His aton-

ing death ; then I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things past, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate from the love of God that is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

## V.

### THE BUDDING OF THE FIG TREE.

OUR blessed Lord accepts the continuity of the Jewish race—separate—suffering, and yet hopeful as lasting to the end. Its reviviscence is a sign of His advent. He says so in these words :

“ Now learn a parable of the fig tree ; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh : so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.”—MATT. XXIV. 32—34.

The ground on which I accept the budding of the fig tree as the symbol of the incipient restoration or reviviscence of the Jews, is that previously to His predicting the budding of the fig tree He came to it looking for fruit where there were plenty of leaves ; and finding none He blasted it, and that fig tree has produced no fruit since. All who have compared the context and the circumstances in which that miracle was wrought, have one unanimous conclusion, that in

blasting the fig tree it could not possibly be a momentary ebullition of anger, or an expression of disappointment, in the Son of God ; nor was the fig tree regarded as a responsible and therefore guilty thing ; it was a lesson to the Jews, adorned with the leaves of a magnificent profession ; watered, tended, sunned, and showered on for many generations past, but with no fruit corresponding to their great privileges, or at all to justify their loud and boasting profession ; our Lord blasted the fig tree, and pronounced a lasting anathema upon it, not because the fig tree was guilty, but to teach the nation of whom it was the symbol, that their hypocrisy at last had filled up their cup, and that the day of their desolation, dispersion, and judgment was now at hand. If it be accepted that this denotes the Jewish race under the curse, the subsequent prediction that the fig tree—why not this same blasted fig tree ?—should again begin to put forth its buds as one of the great symptoms of the approach of the end, is most natural and consistent with the use of the fig tree in the previous instance. That the fig tree in this passage has a connexion with the Jews seems obvious from what he says in the 34th verse ; “ This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled.” The generation that he

alludes to there does not mean, as some commentators, I think, have ignorantly rendered it, "this existing people, this generation of thirty years;" for a generation, in the sense of an existing people of thirty years, was not known to the ancients. The word *γενεα*, translated "generation," is substantially the same as *γενος*, and is used constantly in the Greek writers in the sense of a race, or nationality. Homer speaks of the *γενεα φυλλων*, "the race of leaves;" and also *γενεα ανθρωπων*, "the race of men." And that this word "generation" means the Jewish race, as existing, throughout all the phases of its national aspects, would seem plain from the very use of it in the previous chapter; where our Lord says, *xxiii. 35*, "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation;" that is, as the Jewish race as a nation and in its national existence was guilty of these things, so it, the Jewish people, in their national experience, shall feel the retribution of these things. We have the word thus used in the Gospel of Luke, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the



children of light ;” meaning not a generation of thirty years, but a race of people distinctively. So again in the Epistle to the Philippians Paul says, “ That ye may be blameless, harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation ;” speaking to the Christians in Asia Minor, and distinguishing the Gentile nationality in which they lived as the sphere and scene in which they, Christians, were to develop their Christian features as a holy and a chosen people. Therefore the fig tree blasted is the generation, or the Jewish race, cursed ; the fig tree budding and bursting into blossom under the sweet breath of returning spring, and giving foretold and indication of the everlasting summer, is the Jewish race, some would say, converted, others would say, restored ; we think both restored and converted, in the first instance to their ancient land, in the second to the knowledge and enjoyment of the gospel of Christ.

In proceeding to unfold this subject, let me premise that all are not satisfied that the Jews will be restored. All believe the Jews will be converted ; we have no doubt about this. But there are two opinions as to the process. Some think they will be converted with the rest of the Gentile masses, without any very palpable or visi-

ble distinction ; others, that they will be converted as a nation, and after their conversion be restored to their own land. Others again think, and I confess the last seems to me the Scriptural conclusion, that they will be first restored as a nationality by a special miracle, many things preparing the way ; and that in the midst of their long-deserted land they will be re-constituted in the noblest signification of the words “ a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people ; ” and within the very midst of Palestine and by the banks of their own beloved and never-forgotten Jordan, they shall praise and glorify Him whom their fathers in their ignorance and their folly crucified upon a tree. Now, in order that we may reach not mere guesses or the conclusions of mere human reasoning, let us refer to that blessed book which convinces with few arguments, and has irresistible force wherever it is believed to be, what it demonstrably is, the very mind and will of God. It has been supposed by some, startled at the magnificent promises that constantly contemplate and embosom the restoration of the Jews to their land, that all these promises were exhausted and completely fulfilled in their return from Babylon, and their after-entrance into their land. It seems very difficult to suppose that promises so rich that lan-

guage fails and sinks beneath the splendour and magnificence of the thoughts, have all been fulfilled completely by that miserable mimicry of a restoration which was realized when a handful of the tribes returned from Babylon and commenced the rebuilding of the temple in their own land. For, in the first place, only a remnant of the tribe of Judah returned to their own land ; the Ten Tribes were not suffered to return from Babylon to build the temple and the city. And from that day till the destruction of Jerusalem the Jews have not been an independent nation, as the promises convey ; but tributaries to the Persian, to the Greek, and finally to the Roman. And, in the next place, those promises which speak in such magnificent terms of their restoration and their subsequent enjoyment of peace unbroken, undisturbed, and uninterrupted ; and continuing to be a people that should sin no more, but holy, and happy, and prosperous for ever, are all contradicted, if they refer to these events only by the facts of the case. That a portion of Judah was restored was necessary, that Christ's birth might be seen, according to the promise, to be from the tribe of Judah. But the descendants of those who were restored, so far from being kept in their land an everlastingly prosperous, holy, and happy people, crucified the Lord of Glory, murdered

the evangelists, and apostles, and prophets ; and, finally, so far from having the land theirs for ever, they are dispersed all over the earth, and their house is left unto them desolate to this day. The conclusion that their restoration is yet in the future is the true Scriptural idea, as I think will be obvious, if we take and remember the following six canons of interpretation, very simple and very intelligible, in the reading of this part of prophecy. Where promises of restoration embrace Israel, the Ten Tribes as well as Judah and Benjamin, then it cannot refer to the restoration from Babylon, because Israel, or the Ten Tribes, was not then restored. Secondly, if we read in a promise that their restoration and their conversion occur simultaneously, or in immediate succession the one upon the other, then it cannot refer to their restoration from Babylon. Thirdly, if the prediction be that after the restoration they shall not fall into sin any more, it cannot be the restoration from Babylon. Fourthly, if the promise of their restoration embraces the overthrow of all their enemies, then it cannot be the restoration from Babylon. And if the promise of their restoration implies that it shall be accompanied with or preceded by the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, obviously it cannot allude to the restoration from Babylon. And,

lastly, such prophecies, Zechariah's for instance, as were written subsequently to the return from the captivity of Babylon, cannot refer in the future to a thing already past. Now if these canons or laws of interpretation, conditions perfectly obvious, and such as no one can dispute, are admitted, I think you will be constrained to infer from the promises I shall quote, that the Jew is to be restored in his nationality to Palestine; that there he is to be converted by a special outpouring of the grace and Spirit of God; and, thirdly, that thus restored, he is to abide in that land; and Jerusalem shall again be the capital of the earth; and the ancient Church, cast down but not finally cast off, shall have the precedence amid all the Churches of the earth, and a movement in this direction is the fig tree budding, and a sign of the end.

The first promise I shall refer to is found in Isaiah xi. 11, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people;" mark you, the *second* time to do it; the prophet evidently thinking of two times; the first in all probability what he predicted from Babylon; the second, as we shall see, what he predicts from all parts of the earth. Then he adds, "And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall

assemble the outcasts of Israel ;” but the outcasts of Israel were not collected at the restoration from Babylon, did not go into the land of Palestine and rebuild Jerusalem. But this prediction is the gathering together of the outcasts of Israel as well as of the two tribes of Judah. And in the next place, at the 13th verse, “The envy of Ephraim,” the Ten Tribes restored, “shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off.” But after their first restoration, instead of their adversaries being cut off, they were made tributaries to their adversaries ; and, lastly, they came under the domination and yoke of the Romans ; and Jerusalem was finally overthrown, and they were cut off and dispersed over all the earth. And in this 11th chapter the prophet states in the 9th verse that “the earth,” at this time, “shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” Take all these events together ; first, the earth shall be all Christian ; secondly, Israel and Judah shall both be restored ; thirdly, they shall not envy each other ; fourthly, all their adversaries shall cease ; and, fifthly, this is the second restoration in opposition to the first ; and I think the inference is irresistible that it contemplates a restoration that lies in the future ; and to which alone the promises I shall proceed to quote can by any

common fairness be made applicable. In Isaiah xiv. 1, 2, you will find these words, "For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land; and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors." Does not that indicate a period when they shall have complete dominion, supremacy, or, to use the mildest word, precedence, in their own land. And if you say this was fulfilled at their first restoration from Babylon, I refer you instantly for a reply to Nehemiah ix. 36, where you will see an account of their condition, that instead of being a fulfilment looks the very reverse. This is Nehemiah's picture of the restored Jews; a restoration, mind you, that some allege is the fulfilment of the magnificent promise we have quoted. "Behold, we are servants this day, and for the land that Thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it: and it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom Thou hast set over us be-

cause of our sins : also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress.” Is that the fulfilment of this magnificent promise ? How can any one possibly suppose it to be so ? Then I will ask your attention again to another passage, in the book of the prophet Jeremiah, *xxiii. 1.* “ Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture ! saith the Lord. Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people ; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them : behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds ; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them : and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely : and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. Therefore, behold, the



days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." Now mark what takes place here; first, the deliverance that is to take place will be so much more glorious than the truly majestic exodus from Egypt, that he states the deliverance from Egypt shall not be worthy to be compared with it. If you compare the deliverance from Egypt with the deliverance from Babylon, I venture to assert that the former was far more magnificent than the latter. But in this prediction the restoration they are to experience will be vastly more magnificent than that from Egypt. And, in the second place, it is the same nation that is to be thus magnificently restored that is described as having been delivered from Egypt; and therefore it is as a nation, and the Jewish nation. And then, thirdly, when restored they are no longer, in the words of the Epistle to the Romans, to go about seeking to establish their own righteousness, and not submitting to the righteousness of faith; but according to this prediction they are to hail the Lord their Righteous-

ness as their King and their God. Now has any such thing occurred in the history of the Jews? Nothing of the sort; nothing that can possibly approximate to it. And all this, mind you, associated with or subsequent to their restoration to their own land. In Jeremiah xxxi. 28, "And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them,"—that is, the house of Israel and the house of Judah mentioned in the previous text,—"to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, saith the Lord." Whom did he cast down, and pluck up, and destroy, and scatter? The Jewish nation. Whom will he establish, and build, and plant? The same that were plucked up and scattered. It is not fair in us Gentiles to treat the Jews as we sometimes do. We take all the curses—"I will pluck you up, and destroy you, and afflict you, and scatter you;" and we fling these to the Jews; then we take all the beautiful promises, and we selfishly monopolize them to ourselves. We eat the kernel, and fling the worthless shell to the Jew. But take care, lest in seeking advantage for yourselves you are misinterpreting the Scripture; for it is obvious that the very race that came under the curse is the very race that is to be the heir of the everlasting

blessing. You interpret the curse as the heritage of the Jews, and the interpretation is on your streets, the curse is unmistakeable and obvious. What is the Jew at this moment? Debased, degraded, scattered, a scoff, a by-word, among the nations; there you have the curse. But as you have seen the curse, mark you, literally fulfilled on the nation; you may expect, and you should expect, that the blessing will be literally fulfilled on the nation also.

That all this is absolutely certain God assures us, by stating the covenant made with them in Jeremiah **xxxi. 32**. "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt,"—that is, the Jews,— "which my covenant they brake; but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days," the days of their restoration, "saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts; and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Then the certainty of this he states in the 36th verse; "If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." God says heaven and earth may pass away; but that they shall not cease from being a nation. They are a nation at this moment, distinct, literally dwelling alone among the nations, not numbered with the nations, cohering among themselves, separate from, insulated, absolutely insulated as a nation from the Gentile races altogether. I will now turn to Ezekiel xxxvii., where we have a magnificent and poetic symbol showing the restoration of the Jews. "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about; and, behold, there were very many in the open valley: and lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones,

hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man,"—now here is the explanation,—“these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you

into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves." In the 21st verse:—"Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel: and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all." The nations of the earth are the graves of the buried Israelites; in which they are depressed and buried; masses are in Italy, multitudes under the domination of the Sultan, a sprinkling in Britain, crowds in Austria and Germany; depressed, and politically dead; mammon their god, and the very hope of a Messiah almost effaced from their memories. But God says, I will speak to these scattered wrecks of a mighty nation; scattered like the wrecks of a gallant ship that has been dashed upon the rocks, and floated like drift-wood over the length and breadth of the sea; I will speak to them, and they shall come forth from their graves; and I will put them in their own land, and they shall be no more Ephraim and Judah, but Israel and

Judah shall be one ; and I will be King over them, saith the Lord.

The last promise that I will quote, though I might quote many more, among those that precede their restoration, is in Daniel xii. at the beginning. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people ;" speaking to Daniel ; the children of thy people, that is, Israel ; "and there shall be a time of trouble,"—I believe that time is now opening upon us,—“such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time ; and at that time thy people,” Daniel’s people, the Jews, “shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Our blessed Lord alludes to that time of trouble in the Gospel of St. Matthew, where He tells us that there will be a time of trouble such as never was, and such as never shall be again. That time of trouble was nothing that ever occurred in Babylon ; it never took place at Jerusalem. Some persons, Professor Lee amongst the rest, have written to show that this time of trouble was the destruction of Jerusalem. But the prophecy of Daniel is, that during this time of trouble the Jews shall be *delivered* ; but during the siege of Jerusalem the Jews were *dispersed* ; and therefore it could not refer to

the destruction of Jerusalem. Nor was the destruction of Jerusalem a time of trouble so great as there shall never be the like of; for we read there is to be at the last times a time of trouble that has no precedent and no parallel; and it is in that time Daniel says God's people shall be delivered.

I need not read the promises contained in Zechariah, because Zechariah wrote his prophecy after the restoration from Babylon; and nobody, therefore, the most strenuous opponent, will assert that Zechariah alludes to the first restoration. Open any part of his remarkable prophecy, for instance, the 8th chapter at the 21st verse, where he says, "And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord." Turn to the last two chapters, the 12th chapter especially; and I ask you to notice the continuous expression, "That day;" and if you will read the 12th chapter and the 13th and 14th chapters of Zechariah, you will see that all the events predicted in them are to transpire at one given period; because you will constantly read, "In that day." For instance, in chapter



xii. 2, "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And *in that day* will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people." Then the 4th verse; "*In that day* I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness; and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness. And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the Lord of hosts their God. *In that day* will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah." This cannot refer to the restoration from Babylon, because it was past when these words were written; secondly, it cannot refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, because the very reverse of what then occurred is predicted here. For what took place at the de-

struction of Jerusalem? Instead of Jerusalem being a burdensome stone; instead of all the nations being scattered; instead of the governors of Judah being like a torch of fire in a sheaf of Gentiles to consume it; instead of the Jews being placed in Jerusalem, and Jerusalem being inhabited again, and their dwelling in their own land; instead of the 9th verse, "It shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem;" instead of these things being then fulfilled, all nations destroyed Jerusalem at its siege by Titus. It is therefore utterly impossible to suppose that the prophet was inspired by the Spirit of God, to predict the dispersion of the Jews under Titus and Vespasian 1800 years ago in language that conveys precisely the opposite of what took place on that occasion. Let us read in the same chapter what follows after he has told all this. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." Now observe what follows; first the triumph of Jerusalem, the destruction of all nations that oppose it; then the Jews located in

their own land; then God pouring out upon them the spirit of grace, the spirit of supplication, their looking upon Christ whom they pierced. Is not this proof of their conversion subsequent to their restoration; the one preliminary to the other? And to show that they are all located in their land when this conversion takes place, I ask you to look at the 12th verse of this 12th chapter of Zechariah: it is said, in the 11th verse, "In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem." Then verse 12, "And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart:" certain names comprehensive of more tribes than one being employed; but denoting that they will be arranged in tribes; that these will be located in Jerusalem as their fathers were; and that on their location as a nation in the midst of Palestine will God pour out His Holy Spirit upon them.

How is it possible to believe that that magnificent chapter, Isaiah lx.,—its eloquence surpassing the richest specimens of human rhetoric, its inspiration unquestioned,—relates to anything short

of that magnificent restoration which we have heretofore been contemplating?

I candidly admit that in the New Testament, except in the Apocalypse, there is very little said about the restoration of the Jews; the great mission of Apostles and Evangelists and of our Lord was to convert the Jew and turn his heart to a Christ that was crucified, not then and there to Christ that would be crowned. In the Apocalypse the Jew comes in more places than one unmistakeably. But even the New Testament is not silent. "Your house," he says in Matthew xxiii., "is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Now what does that imply? "Your house," that is, your nation, your temple, "is left unto you desolate;" and ye shall not see me, as you now see me and hear me speaking to you, until your conversion, when your reception of me will be, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." But what am I to make of that passage in Luke, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"? "Trodden under foot." Why Jerusalem? why not the Jews? or why nationally viewed at all? And does not that very "until" imply a restoration—that when the times

of the Gentiles are fulfilled, then Jerusalem shall be restored? In the first chapter of the Acts we find a question put by the disciples, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" Every Jew looked for the restoration of the kingdom he had lost. Now what was our Lord's reply? Did He say, "That is a carnal dream; that is a vain expectation?" No; but He said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power," &c. He does not say the expectation was wrong; but He tells them it was not the time to look for it or calculate upon it. In Romans xi. the verses evidently relate mainly to their conversion, which we also believe in; but I think some of them even indicate more than that, and imply restoration. "Blindness is happened to Israel, until the fulness"—that is, the times of the fulness—"of the Gentiles be come in." If Israel is not to have some distinctive position in its national aspect, why do they stand out nationally? and why are they constantly regarded as separate from the Gentiles, if they were to be converted like the Gentiles? Why are they not disintegrated and mixed up with the Gentiles, and fused into the great mass of the human family? why constantly distinct, insulated; hav-

ing special promises, a special destiny, a special and distinctive hope? And, says the apostle, "If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" implying, that the restoration and conversion of the Jews will make an impression upon the wide world, deep, lasting, and beneficent. Again he says, "If the casting away of them"—that is, of the nation—"be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them"—that is, of the nation—"be but life from the dead?" All this does seem to me to imply that there is more than conversion; that there is restoration also. I ask, how comes it to pass that as a nation they are dispersed over every land, kept insulated, separated, distinct; the predictions of their dispersion clearly, unmistakeably fulfilled; predictions side by side with those of their restoration, in words as unmistakeable, and not yet fulfilled;—what is all this but the evidence, the irresistible evidence, that as a nation they were cut off and dispersed, and that when God speaks of their return, it is as a nation that they shall be gathered and return? Did the Jew hearing these promises of Ezekiel ever construe gathering out of all nations as their conversion; or planted in their own land as being merely

attached to the Gentile Church? The depth and reality of their national ruin is the measure and the prophecy of their national restoration. Why does Palestine in Scripture, in providential history, in its present condition, occupy so singular a position? The Sultan merely defends it—to the shame of Christendom be it spoken—against the contending monks that have lost all faith in a living Saviour, and are fighting for the empty tomb which has no consecration and no life. How is it at this moment that Palestine has a soil that could supply the granaries of the world, and yet it does not raise enough corn to feed its own miserable inhabitants? Why at this moment are its mountains, that used to be covered with vines and olive trees, and all the fruitage of the loveliest tropical climate, merely rocks torn by the lightning, and possessed only by the eagle, and the vulture, and the Bedouin? Why is there now in that country no Nebo, no Pisgah, looking from which we can see the goodly land from afar; a land of promise, and a land of fertility? Why is it still kept so? The religious condition of that country at this moment is singular also. The Arab, the Turk, the Greek, the Romanist, the Rabbi, all claim a right in it; all intensely strive for it; and they who are the least at home in it once were its

lords, and are prophesied to be its lords again. The Jew himself at this moment, if traced in every nation, is debased and degraded, seeking happiness in wealth, not where Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob found it. What is singular in the case of the Jew, you do not find him, like our aristocracy and country gentlemen, with broad acres rooted in the soil, fixed to it, and in a great convulsion having property that is not convertible,—for acres cannot be carried away in our steam ships to distant lands: the Jew has his money all portable; he is ready to move at a day's notice; his money is all in the shape of gold, silver, or property at least easily convertible. It indicates a nation not fixed to the soil, not rooted in it, but floating on it; and waiting for the glorious signal that will one day illuminate the broad horizon, and be the token to Israel that their exodus into their own land is once more to begin. We find the Jews at this moment incorporated with no nation, yet living in every nation; speaking every tongue, drinking from the Thames, the Tiber, the Danube, the Rhine, the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Ganges; breathing every atmosphere; but having no place they can call their own country, no home that they believe will be permanent upon earth. Assuredly, this fact of the insulation of the Jews,



in the world and not of it, is so peculiar, so utterly without precedent, so entirely without parallel, that it alone suggests that, as a nation kept separate, distinct, and insulated, they are destined as a nation to be restored to all the enjoyments and privileges and blessings that we have been studying in the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, and others.

If we be arrived at that period which I endeavoured to show is the description of our present position—the almost entire exhaustion of the contents of the sixth vial and the first sprinkling or baptism of the seventh;—you will recollect, that at the close of the sixth vial, the drying up of the Euphrates, or the waning of the Crescent, is instantly to be accompanied by the preparation of the way of the kings of the East, as it is translated, in Rev. xvi. 12. “The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared.” A very clever and ingenious person, but not a very wise interpreter of Scripture, said that the kings of the East are the East India Company, and that it meant they were to have a domination that none else could have. But had he looked into his Greek Testament he would not have put such an interpretation on it. It

does not mean kings governing the East, which would have been a totally different phrase; but it is βασιλεις απ' ανατολων, "kings from the sun-rising," coming from that quarter, not governing it. And that they are not the kings of the earth is plain, because John says, "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs; they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth;" that is, the earthly potentates. But separate from earthly kings is a body here called "kings from the sun-rising." In the descriptions of the Jews in Exodus, we find they were a kingdom of priests, or kings and priests unto God. And therefore almost every interpreter has come to the conclusion that these kings from the sun-rising, who find their path opened up by the waning of the Mahometan Crescent, or the wasting of the Turkish power, are God's ancient people, now discrowned kings, but the heirs of a kingdom that shall never be moved. If this be true, we may expect that the restoration of the Jews to their own land, connected as it is with what is now taking place in Turkey, and wherever the Sultan's domination spreads, will be indicated in the first buds, the early spring buds of the fig tree; and thereby the first foretokens of the restoration of the Jews will be made unmistakeably

visible throughout all lands. Now, if it be true that the first wasting of Turkey in Europe began in 1820, and that it was to go on drying up till it utterly disappear—and that it is now on the verge of extinction, if not already gone,—if this be true, we may expect that when it takes place, or soon after, the way will be prepared, like the bed of a river from which the water has been evaporated, and along its dry channel this people from the east of the Euphrates, or the Jews, will begin to march homeward to their own land. Have we any tokens of this? are there any buds upon the blasted fig tree? There are. During the last thirty years Jews have been suffered, in considerable numbers, for the first time in 1800 years, to live within the walls of their own ancient capital, Jerusalem. More conversions to Christianity have occurred among the Jews during the last thirty years than during the previous 1800 years. Some of the most learned men in the universities in Germany are at this moment converted Jews. At the same time a great body of the Jews is for the first time during the last few years laying aside Rabinism, or the Commentaries of the Rabbis, and reading the Old Testament in its own holy and perfect light. Judaism is now the Popery of the Old Testament; the moment that a Roman

Catholic abjures the traditions of the Church and the interpretations of the Fathers,—than which two things nothing is more fabulous and less to be depended upon,—he is half way over to Protestantism; so the moment that a Jew lays aside the Commentaries of the Rabbis, his Mishnas and his Gemaras, it becomes impossible that he can escape the conviction that in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah Jesus of Nazareth is unequivocally predicted.

In the next place, the political condition of the Jews is the problem of almost every Cabinet of Europe. In our own it is the question still discussed, on which I pronounce neither negatively nor affirmatively here, whether the Jews shall be admitted into our Parliament. Why should any statesman plague himself about the Jews? There is no probability of the Jews fomenting an insurrection; they are not a troublesome people; let them make 50 per cent., and they do not care whether it is autocrat, or czar, or prince, or aristocrat, or democrat, or republic, that have the government in the land; and therefore our interest in them cannot be merely to keep them quiet. It is the breath from on high touching the fig tree, indicating its reviviscence is near, and teaching the nations of Christendom that the era of Judah and Israel's

deliverance is close at hand. What is very singular, as if to show us how events are going, the war which has sent such and so bitter streams into so many once bright and happy homes, and has caused so many hearts to break in 1855 that were bounding in 1854, had its beginning in Jerusalem. It was the question of the shrines in Jerusalem that originated that fell and terrible war, the issues of which, like its calamities, it is impossible for us to calculate.

In the next place, the Jews have begun at this moment to have a literature. There is a newspaper published by the Jews, called the Hebrew Observer, which I read; and were you to take it in,—it costs only a few pence, and is published once a week,—you would be struck by some of the things in it. They have sent colonists into Palestine; and these colonists write home like the spies recording the condition of the land to the pilgrims that are marching through the desert. An American, a Mr. Noah,—the name seems singular to us,—has collected a million of dollars for the purpose of rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. A Society is at this moment formed in London, and I was waited upon by a member of it, to aid to bring the Jews back to Jerusalem. And it is rumoured—I do not say that rumours are fit things to build upon—that a very wealthy

and distinguished Jew, characterized by his philanthropy, his love of his people and his tribe, has offered to advance large sums to some of the Western Powers, on the condition that Palestine, taken from the Sultan, to which the Sultan has no right, shall be restored to its own ancient people. Were this to occur, you would have at once the commencement of that which is the burden of prophecy; the prediction does not mean that every power employed to accomplish it is good. The prediction of the Crucifixion does not imply that those who crucified the Lord of Glory did what was right. God predicts an issue; he overrules some, he inspires others, to accomplish it.

This Hebrew Observer has some very interesting papers upon their efforts to colonize Palestine. For instance, in a very recent number they say,

“ We will not at present enter into a discussion of the prophecies bearing on this topic; nor investigate how far we should rely on a sudden development of the Divine policy which is to effect the great end of the prediction of Israel's seers; but it surely cannot be wrong for us to endeavour to promote the happy future by some exertions of our own. *It may be that all efforts will be in vain; it is possible that a curse does rest on the land, which it is not yet time to have removed; it is possible enough that the man is yet want-*

*ing who could be a leader in this blissful regeneration.* Still we think that it is worth while to make an effort to aid our brethren already on the spot with the means to realize a self-amelioration, which they are now anxious to effect, being sick at heart of the life of pauperism, which is a never-ending, always recommencing series of miseries.

“Whatever the reasons may be, whether sought for in the marvellous or in natural causes, the fact is undoubted, that Palestine has ever been the land of affection to all believers in the Bible. The Mahometan has his Al-Charim; the Christians possess their various churches and shrines; and they all, no less than we, attach the highest earthly sanctity to the spots consecrated by the remarkable events of patriarchal and Biblical history. It may be a fanatical error, as some would characterize it, for Jews to cluster round these places, where formerly they were the lords, but now little better than slaves and beggars, and subject to overbearing and tyrannical masters. But so they have been from the day the Temple fell a sacrifice to the flame, whether the rulers were the Normans, the Arabs, the Crusaders, the Egyptians, or the Turks. At no time for eighteen centuries, and even before the emblem of our national glory fell, were we otherwise than aliens on our soil; still Palestine was the land of our hope, the country of our desire.

“Hence, we say, could a numerous agricultural population be drawn to Palestine, we should not only contribute towards the permanent relief of those residing there already, but we should open an asylum

for many who now know freedom only as a traditional word, recorded in Scripture, as once their own in ancient days, of which they and their fathers before them have lost the true signification. If it could be accomplished, that the surplus of unemployed Israelites of Poland, Russia, Galicia, Hungary, and Turkey, should be planted in agricultural colonies in the valleys of the land of Israel, under the protection of the present energetic Sultan, Abdul Medjid, with full liberty to organize municipal corporations, permitted to bear arms, and fully empowered to use them in case of an attack from without, we should do much to ameliorate the abject condition of European communities, who now are daily exposed to the insult and contumely of their arrogant and proud oppressors. If his home should become intolerant to an Israelite, he would know whither he could resort and find the means of self-support, without the danger of being led away from the path of duty, which now, alas! is too often the case with those who go to England, France, and America, from other countries, simply to follow the only pursuit which seems to promise them a speedy return, namely, trading, in one of its many shapes, all other employments being inaccessible to a stranger who is unacquainted with the language and customs of the land he just arrives in. But were Palestine once open to receive Jewish immigrants; were its fields once more fertile and its cities rebuilt anew; not alone that many could unite themselves to its inhabitants to cultivate the soil, sure of a speedy and rich return for their labour; but those who have the genius and tact for business



could carry on profitable commerce with all parts of the world, in exchange for the varied produce of the fields and vineyards, and perhaps the many rich mineral resources which now lie unused and unknown, against whatever is raised from the soil and produced by skill and labour in every other country.

“The ruinous cities would soon be rebuilt; the hovels of the timid tillers of the soil, who now fear to work, dreading the assault of the marauding Bedouin, would soon make place for comfortable farm-houses; the pastures, now desolate, would resound at evening with the bells of the returning flocks and herds, led home by the blithe and gay shepherds as in ancient times; the ports which are now rarely visited by the ships of foreign nations, because there is so little for them to carry away, would again be filled with vessels displaying the flag of every country; and the roads, on which now painfully toils the camel of the caravan in its slow progress, would be made noiseful by the thundering steam-car in its impatient boundings to reach the place of its destination; and all because industry once more would have breathed life and vigour into the listless, indolent few, that now vegetate, not live—starve, and not enjoy life, in a land which formerly nourished its millions of men and cattle, and now produces scarcely enough to feed its handful of persons, coming, as they have done, from many climes, without concert of action, without any cohesion or unity of purpose.”

I cannot help adding the following beautiful lines :

Are these the ancient holy hills  
 Where angels walked of old ?  
 Is this the land our story fills  
 With glory not yet cold ?  
 For I have past by many a shrine,  
 O'er many a land and sea,  
 But still, O ! promised Palestine,  
 My dreams have been of thee.

I see thy mountain cedars green,  
 Thy valleys fresh and fair,  
 With summers bright as they have been,  
 When Israel's home was there ;  
 Though o'er thee sword and time have past,  
 And Cross and Crescent shone,  
 And heavily the chain hath prest,  
 But thou art still our own !

Thine are the wandering race that go  
 Unblest through every land,  
 Whose blood hath stained the polar snow,  
 And quenched the desert sand.  
 And thine the homeless hearts that turn  
 From all earth's shrines to thee,  
 With their lone faith for ages borne  
 In sleepless memory.

For thrones are fallen—nations gone,  
 Before the march of time,  
 And where the ocean rolled alone  
 Are forests in their prime.  
 Since Gentile ploughshares marred the brow  
 Of Zion's holy hill—  
 Where are the Roman eagles now ?  
 Yet Judah wanders still.

And hath she wandered thus in vain,  
A pilgrim of the past ?  
No ! long deferred her hope hath been,  
But it shall come at last :  
For in her wastes a voice I hear,  
As from some prophet's urn ;  
It bids the nations build not there,  
For Jacob shall return.

O ! lost and loved Jerusalem !  
Thy pilgrim may not stay  
To see the glad earth's harvest home  
In thy redeeming day.  
But now resigned in faith and trust,  
I seek a nameless tomb ;  
At least beneath thy hallowed dust  
O give the wanderer room.

Judah's blasted fig tree shall be clothed with green leaves, and fragrant blossom, and rich fruit ; and venerable Rabbis, priests and Levites, whose fathers shouted once, " Away with him, away with him ! crucify him, crucify him ! " shall soon, it may be sooner than we expect, shout together, " Hosannah to the Son of David ! blessed is Jesus that cometh in the name of the Lord ! " We all agree that this will be the case ; but I confess it adds to the ecstasy of my hope, when I think that the place on which they will stand, as they thus shout and sing, shall be Calvary, Gethsemane, and the garden of Joseph of Arimathæa.

It seems to me certain, that the dry bones buried in the graves of the earth are beginning to feel the breath of returning life, and at no very distant period, it may be, we shall witness an exodus more majestic than that from Egypt or from Babylon ; when the old man, weary with the burden of life, and the young man, full of the buoyancy of youth, and the poor man, faint with his many labours, shall gather and coalesce like streams from distant parts of the earth ; and roll like their own Jordan, a magnificent and glorious flood, reflecting on its bright bosom mercy and truth that have met together over Palestine, and righteousness and peace that have kissed each other. Then Israel will lay aside its sackcloth and put on its ascension robes ; then a new festal glory will gild the lowliest hamlet of Palestine, with all the splendours of the heavenly Jerusalem itself ; and on Carmel, and on Zion, and on Mount Tabor shall fall a lovelier sunshine than ever clad their loftiest summits, and from the far distant Nebos and Pisgahs of Europe and Asia the nations shall look together at ancient Palestine ; and will begin to sing what the nations sung of old as they beheld that land, “ Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion. Let

Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following ; for this God is our God for ever and for ever."

## VI.

### CONSUMPTION AND RUIN OF BABYLON.

“And the cities of the nations fell : and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.”—REV. xvi. 19.

THERE are just two supernatural bodies upon earth, the Church of Christ and the Church of Rome. When I say the Church of Christ, I do not mean any visible, national, provincial, or congregational body, but the company of all true Christians of every name, scattered through every sect ; and having these grand distinguishing characteristics, that they are clad in white robes, — that they are regenerated by God’s Spirit,—that they are living purely in this life, and waiting for the fulfilment of the promises and the realization of their hopes in reference to a future and a better world. We may love the visible Church of which we are members, and believe that visible Church to be the best of the kind ; and yet our charities may stretch beyond its walls, and embrace in their ample folds all

true Christians throughout the world. It does not mean that to be catholic in our sympathies we cease to be attached to the communion in which we have been baptized, and to whose forms, ceremonies, discipline, we have heretofore been accustomed. You may love your own fire-side most, but yet you may wish that all fire-sides may be as bright and all roof-trees as happy as yours. You may love your own Church most, but yet you may see branches of the Church universal where there may be in your judgment great defects, but where nevertheless are all the substantive elements of the true Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, the company of all true Christians of every name throughout the world. I mean by the Church of Rome that body whose living and visible head is at this moment Pio Nono; whose brand in the Bible is Babylon, the Apostasy; and whose head is there decribed as the man of sin. When I speak severely of the system, I wish all clearly to understand that it is not in anger or wrath with its victims. On the contrary, as can easily be understood, one's convictions of the evil of a system may be most intense, and if founded upon evidence they may be most just; and yet one's feelings towards those that are the victims of that system may be warm, genial, and all that Chris-

tians should entertain to all the world. And if our Roman Catholic brethren—if such perhaps I may be allowed to call them—be involved in deep error, it is God's prerogative to judge them; it is my privilege to teach them the truth, and to pray for them that they may know the more excellent way. And surely, if they be fatally wrong, as I believe them to be, that fact should only make us pity them the more. It is very strange that we cannot speak on this subject without many persons thinking that we must be either violent or bigoted; or that we must imitate the heads of the very system we denounce, and fulminate anathemas against those who are its victims. This is not necessary; we may speak faithfully and yet affectionately. And never do words tell with such emphasis as when they have come forth from the warmth of a sympathizing Christian heart; never is truth so mighty as when it is conveyed in the simplest words, and with the most affectionate expressions. We do not wish to be violent, we do not require to exaggerate. Our ground is so strong, the evidences of it are so clear, that I am sure the contrast needs only to be made to enable us to see that we have truth, and that our unhappy brethren who differ from us, and are under the bondage of Babylon, have lost the way of truth.



The subject in this Lecture is the gradual decline or consumption of Babylon. I observed in a previous Lecture that the 1260 years, at the expiring of which Rome was to end her supreme domination throughout the world, commenced A. D. 530; when Justinian in his Pandects invested the Bishop of Rome with civil power. These 1260 years beginning at A. D. 530 would end at A. D. 1790. I said, if this be so we might expect that the Romish Church, growing and ultimately dominant during that period, would at its close begin gradually to decline. The position, therefore, that I am now to illustrate by simple facts is, that since 1790 the Roman Catholic Church throughout the whole world has been losing power, numbers, influence; and in spite of reactions and eddies in the current, that she is gradually rushing to her final doom, when she perishes, and sinks like a millstone into the mighty sea, and is heard of no more at all. I do not at this moment stop to identify the Church of Rome with Babylon; I will assume that she is so. It would take hours to establish it by evidence. I may however state, that I do not know a single commentator or writer upon prophecy—from Canon Wordsworth to Mr. Elliott—who does not concur that Babylon mentioned in the Apocalypse is the type and exponent of

the Roman Catholic Church. I may indicate what are some of the grounds. For instance, she is said to be "the great city that reigneth over the kings of the earth." In John's day, in the year 90, there was but one city that answered to that description—namely, Rome. Secondly, she is said to be the city seated upon seven hills. It has been attempted by Bellarmine and others to show that Constantinople answers to this; but anybody who personally examines it will see that there is not the shadow of a shade of a ground for such an assertion. But, not only is Rome on seven hills, geographically so, but we find the Latin poets alluding to her as the *Septicollis urbs*—"The seven-hilled city." I might select many quotations from classical writers, all setting forth Rome as by distinction the seven-hilled city. This "city," in order to show it was more than a mere civil institution, is delineated as "the mystery of iniquity;" "drunk with the blood of the saints and of the martyrs;" it is still to be consumed and destroyed; and the picture of its destruction in Revelation xviii. is something awful. In short, the whole of the predicted traits so completely find their counterpart in the Roman Catholic Church, that, alarmed at the identity, the Roman Catholic divines have struggled hard to stave off the inference, but

have utterly and helplessly failed. The brands are clear, their applications plain, their significance complete. The Church of Rome, or Babylon, is described in 2 Thess. ii. 3, in these words, "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come." Now our translation here is unhappily very faulty; I will just read the words, translating literally from the original tongue. "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except there come the apostasy," ἡ ἀποστασία, not "a falling away," but "the apostasy; and that man of sin," who is also ὁ ἀνομος—literally, that lawless; that man without restraint, without law; who is a law to himself—"be revealed, the son of perdition"—either he that hastens perdition in others, or that is himself to be destroyed;—"who opposeth and exalteth himself above all,"—ἀντιταμνος, elsewhere ἀντιχριστος—"lies in the room or in the place of all that is called God." Ἀντι, I may add, as every one that knows the elements of the Greek tongue is aware, in composition with a noun of office does not mean "against," but "in the room of." For instance, ἀνθυπατος does not mean a person opposed to the consul, but a person in the room of the consul; so ἀντιβασιλευς does not mean a person opposed to a king, but a person in the place of the king; so ἀντιχριστος,

antichrist, does not mean a person opposed to Christ, but a person that takes the place of Christ. Hence the character of the Church of Rome is not that of a body directly opposed to Christ, for such she would repudiate ; this is the character of the infidel ; but her great brand is this—that she takes the room of Christ, sits in his place, pretends to his prerogatives, absolves from sin, brings down Christ upon the altar, makes an atonement for sin, exercises jurisdiction over the future world as well as over this world ; and shows that she takes the place of Christ, as if she had the power and the prerogatives of Christ. “ So that he sits in the temple of God.” The Greek word there for “ temple.” is *ναος*, which means the holiest place of the temple ; as we would say, the chancel. When the Pope is consecrated to his office, he is enthroned on the very place on which the bread and wine are assumed to be changed by the priest into the body and blood of the Son of God. There the Pope is seated, while the Cardinals round him intone the *Te Deum* ; “ We praise thee, O God ; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.” Then Paul says that this “ mystery of iniquity doth already work,” in its elements, in its principles ; in the words of Luther, “ Every man is born with a pope in his heart ; ” “ it doth already work, and will work, till he that

letteth," or preventeth, "be taken out of the way." Who is this? The Roman Cæsar, or emperor; he was the great restrictive power; and accordingly the instant that the dynasty of the Cæsars ceased, the dynasty of the Popes began; and thus, when the dynasty of the Cæsars ceased, that Wicked One was revealed, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth,"—the action which I am to show in this Lecture,—and finally will destroy "with the brightness of his personal coming." What I contend for is, that the present crisis is the time of Rome's great and cumulative judgments; so that from 1790 till now she has been undergoing, with more or less severity, those denounced judgments. It is a great mistake nevertheless to think that the Roman Catholic system is a transparently stupid system, and that there is little chance of us enlightened people in the 19th century joining her communion. There cannot be a worse misapprehension. The Church of Rome is not a clumsy imposture; she is a magnificent conception; so magnificent, so seductive, so subtle, I would say so charming in her whole exterior worship, that if I were not a Christian by grace I should become a Roman Catholic by the seductions of Babylon. Hence I feel most thoroughly that none are proof against that system,

save they whose hearts are renewed by the Spirit of God, and are Christians in deed and in truth. But while I assert this, and in yet stronger terms, I am free also to admit that there have been, and now are, in the Church of Rome true Christians. Can I deny that Pascal the Jansenist, expelled, I admit, yet adhering, was a true Christian? He lived in it, and died in it. It would be very wrong to deny that Fenelon was a Christian; it is certain that Martin Boos, who officiated in it as a priest to the end, was a true Christian. Their position, it is true, was anomalous enough. That there are true Christians in it God's word proves by the appeal and invitation to them at the moment that Rome is about to be destroyed. I believe this moment is now come. God's cry from heaven to earth is, "Come out of her, my people;" showing, therefore, that God has a people in her, but, as I contend, not of her, but in spite of her influence. And when certain persons say, "Well, how can you say that that Church is so bad, seeing there are Christians in it?" I answer, it is evidence not that she by her excellency creates true Christians, but that the light of heaven and the grace of God are so mighty that they can penetrate the most formidable obstructions, and touch and transform men in her very midst, and, though in her, make them

Christians in spite of her. In the same manner there are beautiful flowerets on the heights of the Apennines and the Alps, growing beside the avalanche, that the winds have not withered, and the frosts have not nipped. But they are not the results of their Alpine elevation, or of the influence of the avalanche, but in spite of both. In the desert there are green spots, not the creation of the desert, but the creation of the sunshine and the rain-drops of heaven. So in the Church of Rome God has a people, not of her, but in spite of her; and the instant they have the opportunity clearly set before them they emerge; and so true is this, that the great characteristic of the present age is the rush of thousands from Babylon into the Church of Christ. This Church, corrupt as she is, has, however, a great deal to say for herself. She has for instance a most splendid and impressive ceremonial. Anybody who has ventured on a week-day upon the continent of Europe to witness in Cologne, or in St. Gudule at Brussels, or in Notre Dame at Paris, as I have, High Mass in all its splendours,—not on a Sunday, but on a week-day,—must admit that there is the presence of everything that can possibly arrest and fascinate the senses. And a very sarcastic Frenchman once said, “In the case of nine out of every ten

human beings, if you secure the five senses you may calculate upon all the rest." I do not say that this is always true; but the Church of Rome has acted upon it as if true—she can charm every sense; the sight with her magnificent paintings, processions, ceremonies, golden altars, gorgeous shrines on which is the embroidery of the world; the ear by music to which we have no parallel; a ceremonial altogether most impressive, and especially by doctrines excessively convenient. It is so much more easy to confess to a sympathizing priest than to lay the heart bare to a holy God. It is so much more palatable to human nature to do penance than it is to repent and renounce one's sins. It is so much more easy to mortify the flesh by sackcloth, and nettles, and chains, than it is to mortify the lusts of the flesh. In the Church of Christ the mortification, the confession, the repentance, are an inner and a difficult work; in the Church of Rome they constitute an outer and an easy work. I venture to assert that I could get any young man in London that lives in sin to go a hundred miles with sharp flints in his shoes in order to get absolution, rather than renounce the sin that doth most easily beset him, and seek forgiveness from Christ without money and without price. But however splendid her



rite or ceremonial may be, we must not suppose that such is the evidence of real inward value. On the contrary, I think such and so great splendour is an evidence against her. The true, the beautiful, the good need not decorating ornaments. Christianity is in principle so magnificent that when adorned the least she is adorned the most. The beauty of holiness is real, and lasting as eternity. Brilliancy of style is not affluence of thought; buttercups sparkling in the field do not prove that there are golden mines below. I suspect these two things prove the very opposite of what they are sometimes made, or assumed, to indicate. But, what is there in splendid forms to satisfy an immortal soul? I come to the house of God not to hear fine music, nor to see fine paintings, nor to get my senses charmed. If there is to be a conflict between the Church and the Opera, the Opera has the advantage, and is a thousand times more beautiful than the Church. But I do not go to Church as to an ecclesiastical Opera. I go to Church to hear truths that will enlighten me, to get bread that will feed my hungry soul, strength for the hard and weary work of the coming week, and to be encouraged while I tread the dusty levels of time, looking up to the sunny table-land where all is light and where is no shadow at all. When I go to hear a min-

ister I say, "Give me not beauty, but give me bread. Oh let me have true bread in a wicker basket, rather than mere flowers, or poisoned bread, in a most exquisitely chased gold or silver one." Besides, in such things as decoration, or ornament, there is no saving efficacy; the eye looks to Christ for salvation, not to these, or to such extrinsic things. The practical effect is, that in Roman Catholic countries, where the ceremony is all; where the best minister is the best master of ceremonies; where the eye, the ear, and the taste are charmed and regaled;—in these countries the Roman Catholic mind is dead; the inner life pines, and withers down to its roots, and dies; and they go to Church for an entertainment, not to seek bread and nourishment, light and life.

But in the Church of Rome, additional to her more fugitive attractions, there are moral elements of no common force. A grand pretension, which meets you everywhere, is that she alone has true unity. If, she says, you go to the Church of England, you find that one party inclines to what is called the Tractarian standard, another to the Evangelical standard, another to the broad standard, another to the high standard, or to the low standard. And if you take the Protestants as a body, she adds, they are divided into all sorts of

denominations. But the Church of Rome has not the unity which she contends for as hers. She has never defined where infallibility is, and she cannot; she has never yet settled the meaning of penance. At this moment she has struck out a new doctrine, that has been opposed and resisted by her ablest divines; and yet in spite of their protests the Pope has franked, and stereotyped as an article of faith—the Immaculate Conception. But here is the evasion, here is the sophism—true unity is not the unity of all contemporaneous people, but of all people from the beginning to the end. It is not unity existing over all quarters of Christendom, but it is a unity that must exist over all centuries of Christendom. And, therefore, if the Church of Rome should be able to show that her priests are perfectly united each with the other in every Church throughout the universe this day, 1855, it would not prove, what she must also show, that the Church of 1855 is the reflection of the Church of the first century, the second century, and the third century. And if she fail in this, she only adduces half the argument that is to prove that she is a united Church. Besides, mere unity is no evidence of truth. There may be unity in error, which is apostasy; or there may be unity in evil, which is conspiracy; or there may be

the unity of the churchyard, which is the unity of death, instead of the unity of the Church, which is the unity of life. Besides, if unity be produced by force or by fraud, it is not the true unity of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The fact is, the Church of Rome has cheated thousands of Protestants who do not think deeply, by setting forth what she has—uniformity; and arguing that it is intrinsic and real unity. Now we contend that all the sections of the Protestant Church, while they have not uniformity, have true unity. All the divisions of the Romish Church have uniformity, but they have no unity. Uniformity is an influence, superinduced from without; unity is the inspiration of God, originated within. In the Roman Catholic Church they forgive all differences on condition that all cling to the Pope; in the Protestant Church we forgive all differences on condition that all cling to Christ. This is just the difference. They have a visible head, with great defects; we have a living Head, with great glory and infinite perfections. Protestants often lose their temper, not their unity; Roman Catholics keep under their temper, and maintain their uniformity. All the sections and modifications of Protestantism are the different chapels in the same vast and magnificent cathedral, under the same roof, on the same holy

floor, in each of which is worshipped the same God, but in different dialects of the same catholic and holy tongue. In the Roman Catholic Church it is all one grand corporation, ostensibly perfect, inwardly full of conflict, collision, and dispute.

Another pretence, too, often made by the members of the Roman Catholic Church, is, theirs is the old Church, and we Protestants are a new and upstart body. She quotes a great deal in her favour in this respect ; she shows, for instance, that she at this moment walks upon the stones of the Appian Way, trodden by the Apostles Peter and Paul, as she alleges ; that she worships at the altars raised by Constantine, and over the very Catacombs in which the martyrs suffered and died ; and she says she is called the Church of Rome, the same Church, for eighteen or for nineteen centuries. I answer, all this may be only magnificent foliage covering an undergrowth of decay ; it is magnificent turrets sparkling in rising suns, but concealing dark and deep dungeons far down below. The Protestant Church has a new name with the old doctrines ; the Roman Catholic Church has the old name, but with new doctrines. She retains the name, but makes the name consecrate new doctrines ; we have a new name, but we retain in the Protestant Church all

the old doctrines. And it does not follow that because we had a Reformation we made a new Church. We reformed the old Church ; we did not constitute a new Church. Surely the reformation of that which is wrong is not necessarily the innovation of that which is new. Let me illustrate this : we add every fourth year a day to February to keep time going right. But in the lapse of 400 years, time still goes a day wrong. Well, in the middle of last century it was found that time had gone eleven days wrong. Now what did we do ? We actually expunged eleven days. Before we extinguished the eleven days we had what was called Old Style ; we have now what we call New Style. But in truth that which is called Old Style was wrong ; and that which is called New Style is right. So in the same manner what is called a new Church, Protestantism, is the true Church ; and what is assumed to be the old Church, Roman Catholicism, is really the wrong Church.

But I do not dwell upon this ; the point I am to prove to you in this Lecture is, that the Romish Church has been undergoing declension and decay from 1790 downward to the present moment. Let me adduce the evidence of this. First, I notice the popular argument that the Roman Catholic Church is the majority of the

Christian world. This is a mistake, an utter mistake; yet it is one of the most common remarks that we hear in every lecture, that we are a mere fragment, that the Romish Church is the all but universal one. Now what are the facts? In a lecture given by the Rev. Hobart Seymour, to which I am deeply indebted for the following facts, the reverse of this has been demonstrated. For instance, the Protestant Church of Great Britain, Holland, America consists of about a hundred millions; the Greek Church, which is utterly opposed to the Roman Catholic Church, consists of about seventy millions; that is, there are 170 millions of professing Christians opposed to the Roman Catholic Church. The Church of Rome as a whole, even by her own admission, consists of 140 millions; therefore by her own showing she is a minority; for she numbers less than her opponents by 30 millions. The Roman Catholic Church, instead of being the majority, is at this moment in the minority. But let me show how since 1790 her decadence has gradually gone on. In North America, Central America, South America, the proportion of Roman Catholics to Protestants, fifty years ago, was 17 to 4; in 1855 the Protestants are in the majority. That is a gigantic step. In America, meaning the United States, Romanism is decaying. The

Rev. Mr. Mullens, a Roman Catholic priest, was sent to America to collect money for the Irish University. He wrote home to the priests in Ireland to stop emigration to the United States at all hazards; for, says the Rev. Mr. Mullens, almost all the Roman Catholics that emigrate to the United States from Ireland become Protestants; and his advice, therefore, to the Irish priests is to stop emigration to the United States. Now the number of Roman Catholics, according to the Rev. Mr. Mullens, a Roman Catholic priest, that ought to be in the United States, estimating the emigration as he did, should be about four millions; but the number, according to him, who actually are Roman Catholics, is about two millions. So that, according to his own showing, in the last thirty years the Roman Catholics have lost in America alone two millions of adherents. If we include the emigration from Belgium, Spain, and other countries, we shall find that the Church of Rome has not kept anything like the adherents that have poured from her bosom into America from different countries. So much so, that the late American Ambassador, Mr. Lawrence, a most excellent and accomplished American, told me that almost every Roman Catholic who comes to America from Ireland either becomes a Protestant himself in the first generation,



or his children invariably become so. Hence, in that vast country it seems as if God had opened up a means for the conversion of the people of Ireland which we neither anticipated nor could have expected. Let us, in the next place, turn to Europe, and see how the decline proceeds there. In Roman Catholic France the increase of population for the last fifty years has been at the rate of fifteen per cent. ; in Roman Catholic Austria the rate has been about twenty per cent. ; in Great Britain the increase—the Protestant increase—is a hundred per cent. ; in Prussia, another Protestant country, the increase has been a hundred per cent. So that, as matter of fact, we find the Protestant population increasing throughout the world, and the Roman Catholic population gradually decreasing and lessening in amount. Let us now refer to Ireland, about which we know more. The Bishop of Tuam states that he has ten thousand converts from Roman Catholicism in his diocese alone. The Rev. H. Seymour states that the number of converts made through the instrumentality of different societies during the last twenty years, is upwards of 40,000 in the west of Ireland alone. And the priests themselves have admitted the great change that has taken place by denouncing what they call the Soupers ; that is, those who,

they say, bribe the Roman Catholics by soup to leave their own communion. At all events it would show, if a Roman Catholic leaves his Church for a little soup, that his religion has a very little hold of him, and he a very little hold of it. But no such instrumentality is employed; and the charge is quoted to show that all admit the great change that is taking place. The "Nation," a favourite organ of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, says,

"There can no longer be any question that systematized proselytism has met with an immense success in Connaught and Kerry. It is true that the altars of the Catholic Church have been deserted by thousands born and baptized in the ancient faith of Ireland. Travellers who have recently visited the counties of Galway and Mayo, report that the agents of that foul and abominable traffic are every day opening new schools of perversion, and are founding new churches for the accommodation of their purchased congregations. Witnesses more trustworthy than Sir Francis Head,—Catholic Irishmen who, grieved to behold the spread and success of the apostasy, tell us that the west of Ireland is deserting the ancient fold; and that a class of Protestants, more bigoted and anti-Irish, if possible, than the followers of the old Establishment, is grown up from the recreant peasantry and their children. How it is to be met and counteracted is a problem. How is it to be arrested? is a solemn question which priest and lay-

man, which citizen and politician, should seriously consider. For our history tells us that the most persistent and formidable enemies to Catholicity were the children of the first generation of Irishmen who joined the Established Church. Shall the Soupers and tract-distributors accomplish the work which all the force of England for three hundred years has been unable to effect ? ”

In England and Scotland, it is true, we find one melancholy fact—that a certain number of noblemen, and gentlemen, and clergymen, from their ignorance of the controversy, from their really not knowing better, taking as facts assertions which never can be proved, have joined the Church of Rome. In the first place they thought they had nothing to do but open the Fathers, and it would be found that all the Fathers were eloquent in defence of Rome. If it had been so all the Fathers of the Nicene age would not weigh with me one straw against the testimony of the Apostles in the New Testament. But it has turned out that the Fathers are anything but in favour of Romanism ; that, on the contrary, as a body, they protest against its distinctive tenets. And hence Dr. Newman has changed his ground, and taken up the theory of development, or what is really the Church's right to invent new dogmas. It will not do to defend the Roman Church by appeals to the first

four centuries ; hence the new theory that the Church has power to develope new doctrines—as the Pope has lately developed a Thirteenth Article of his Creed, the Article of the Immaculate Conception. But if certain perversions have taken place from Protestantism,—and they can quote some noblemen and gentlemen who have gone over,—they do not tell you that the premier duke of England and other noblemen have within the last two or three years left the Roman Catholic Church, and are now worshipping within Protestant places of worship, to my certain knowledge. They omit to tell you also that great numbers of Roman Catholics of the middle classes are passing over to the Protestant Church. Because we do not display catalogues of the names of converts, they assume that we have none. I am certain, from my connexion as an honorary officer with a Society that has long and alone laboured in this field in England—the Protestant Reformation Society—that there have been vast numbers of true converts amid the humbler classes, by the agency of its Scripture readers, Protestant missionaries, and others. So that though there has been a counter-current in England, yet I venture to assert that at this moment the Roman Catholic Church does not hold nearly such a proportion of the population in

1855 as she did a few years before ; and in the census she could not by any way make out a million persons present on one day in all her places of worship. And yet she has argued that she has two millions, if not three, in England and Scotland.

I pass over to the continent of Europe, and there we see increasing marks of decline. For instance, the Rev. Mr. Allies, who was a clergyman of the Church of England, and now a convert to Rome, states that in 1790 there were 5000 priests in Paris. Paris has just doubled its population during the last half century ; well, according to this the priests in Paris ought now to be 10,000 ; for the population has doubled, and there ought to be double the number of priests. But what is the fact ? They are now actually reduced to 800 ! There were 5000 priests in Paris at the beginning of this century. The population is now doubled, and there ought to be 10,000 priests ; but they have so diminished that there are only at this moment 800. Mr. Allies, who is a most impartial judge in this matter, also states that throughout all France there are only two millions who go to confession. Out of thirty-six millions there are only two millions at the present moment that are *bonâ fide* Roman Catholics ! And, mind you, every Roman

Catholic who does not go to confession at least once a year is, *ipso facto*, an excommunicated person. Again, in Belgium I have seen whole congregations composed of converts from Romanism to Protestantism. At this moment in France,—for by the law of France wherever a whole parish changes its creed the parish church goes with it,—there are several parish churches now Protestant places of worship. I was present at the Oratoire in Paris, where I heard Adolphe Monod and Pasteur Grandpierre give an account of the state of Protestantism in Paris; and they gave most gratifying evidence of its spreading in the face of many obstructions throughout the country. During the great excitement about the Holy Coat at Treves several years ago, 300,000 left the Church of Rome in Austria, where a priest is punished if he allows any of his flock to join the Protestant Church. In the valley of the Zil about 500 Roman Catholics became Protestants, and the King of Prussia gave them a home which the Emperor of Austria denied them. In Spain the convents once contained 53,000 nuns; but so enamoured were these nuns of their lovely abodes, that the instant they had the chance of escape, 21,000 of them ran away and left them. The property of the nunneries and convents of Spain, I need

not add, has been suppressed. In Italy at this moment the same work is going on. A very just view of this is taken in the *Christian Times*, May 25, a paper remarkable for the fulness and accuracy of its foreign news.

“Whilst Piedmont is secularizing the convent property, and Spain is setting up for sale the possessions of the Church, the Pope himself is doing the same thing under another form. He is contracting an exchequer loan with the house of Rothschild on *mortmain* property, that is to say, on “St. Peter’s patrimony.” Where is the difference? And it is worth his while after this to threaten the Government and Chambers of Turin with excommunication, as Monsignor Ghilardi, Bishop of Mondovi, did the other day! It is worth his while now to quarrel with Spain, and with our Grand Duchy of Baden, over the very Church property which the Pope mortgages. Please to remark the bearing of this fact. The successor of Leo X. borrows money—he borrows it of Jews—he borrows it to pay soldiers to defend him against the *love* of his own people—he borrows it, giving security in default of credit—and that security is the *sacred* property of the Church. Assuredly I have no wish to taunt the Pope with his poverty. Would to God, rather, that he were as poor as the Galilean fisherman, whose successor he pretends to be. But, after all, we may be permitted to draw our own conclusion as to the love and generosity of that immense Catholic Church which allows the Holy Father thus to commit his inheritance to the pawnbroker.”

In Nice, in Genoa, in Turin, there are now Protestant Churches ; and in the last place, Turin, the king has authorized a second church to be added. In Tuscany there were 8000 nuns about ten years ago ; there are now only 2000. Dr. Wiseman tried to show that these nuns were so charmed with their cells that nothing would be so dreadful as a visit from Her Majesty's Ministers ; and that the iron gratings were not to keep them in, but to keep off the hands of wicked Protestants without. But we find that wherever a nun gets a chance of escape she is only too happy to seize it, and to be a woman again. In Rome two-thirds of the citizens would gladly get rid of the Pope and the Cardinals too if they could. At this moment the Vicar of Christ, the infallible Head of Christendom, is supported by two crutches, formed out of the bayonets of Austria upon his left and the bayonets of France upon his right ; and the instant that those bayonets are withdrawn, the last tramp of the retreating soldier will wake those crashes in the Vatican and in St. Peter's that will sound the death-knell of the Papacy and all that are connected with it. And out of those two-thirds that are opposed to the Papacy I am told that one-half nearly are disposed to Protestantism, if not already Protestants. In Naples there were



47,000 priests fifty years ago ; now there are just 27,000 : fifty years ago there were 25,000 monks ; now there are 8000. Go to any nation, capital, or city, throughout Europe or America, and the number of Roman Catholics, of priests, of monks, of nuns, has decreased and is decreasing in a rapidly growing ratio since 1790 onward to the present moment.

Now the only sad element—and with this I must close these remarks—is found, I admit, in the perversion of a number of clergymen of the Church of England still remaining in it to what is called Tractarianism. I have looked carefully at the whole of that subject—not as a member of the Scotch Church, but simply as a Protestant ; and I am satisfied these clergymen must either advance or they must retreat. There is no *via media* between the Protestantism of the Thirty-nine Articles and the Popery of the Canons of the Council of Trent. This deterioration is most discouraging. But I think it has reached its maximum. Tractarianism is not the legitimate growth of the Church of England. That tree, that national tree, planted by the Reformers, was the planting of the Lord ; and when I state my testimony, it will be counted the more impartial in this case just because it is mine. A few spiders have spread their webs among its

branches; a few caterpillars have gnawed its leaves and its fair fruit; but the true policy is, not for the revolutionist therefore to cut down the tree, but for the Bishops—if they are not looking over instead of overlooking—to remove the caterpillars, and for the Churchwardens to remove the webs that the spiders have woven; and the tree will grow the more beautiful, its leaves the more green, and its fruit the more fragrant, in consequence. Because of evil that has crept into that Church, not of it or produced by it, we are not therefore to oppose the Church, but to cleanse and remove that which is wrong.

It has been thought that the recent Papal Aggression is evidence that Rome is not losing power. I believe if ever that Church committed a fatal error it was the Papal Aggression of 1850. For what has it developed? It has proved that Tractarianism would, if it could, be a pioneer of the Pope; it has shown what the Pope and Dr. Wiseman would do if they could—subject the crown of England to the tiara of Rome. But the Pope has discovered, and Dr. Wiseman has experienced, that the feeble pulse at an aged western Bishop's wrist is not the beat of Old England's heart; and that the crotchets of a few misled men were not the convictions of a great Protestant nation.

Tractarianism, with its great mistakes and grievous errors, has reached its maximum. It is after all but a meagre imitation of a real thing. Popery is a real thing; Protestantism is a real thing; but Tractarianism is neither the one nor the other. If I want to see Popery full blown, I go to St. Peter's; but if I want to see a very meagre, miserable mimicry of it, I must go to St. Barnabas.

Thus there is proof that Romanism is gradually passing away; the numbers of its adherents are rapidly declining. Soon its death-blow will descend. And if this be our place in prophecy, we may live to see the day when it will be reverberated from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen."

This serves to confirm the position that I have started with—that we are at that crisis when the seventh vial is being poured out, when the evening shadows are spreading over the earth; and when men begin to feel we may be at the twilight of a dispensation which will be followed by the morning burst of a bright and a glorious day.

The cry that is now heard throughout Christendom on this the eve of her destruction is, "Come out of her, my people." This cry is now echoed and re-echoed by the various Protest-

ant Societies, and the swelling current of conversions is the practical response, and in the increasing converts we see another proof of the epoch at which we are arrived. Our age is full of hope. Brilliant lights are striking through the dark clouds. At evening-time it grows light.

## VII.

### THE RUSSIAN AND NORTHERN CONFEDERACY.

“And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: and I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee. Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee. Thus saith the Lord God; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwallled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now in-

habited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land. Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil? Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: and thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord God; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them? And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord."—EZEK. XXXVIII.

I INTIMATED in the course of a previous Lecture that in this I should endeavour to do what appears at first sight extremely difficult, to show with all humility that the great northern power, whose unhallowed deeds and wanton aggression have sent so many streams of bitterness into so many families in our land, is not unnoticed, but rather clearly identified and shadowed forth, by the sacred penman. The Bible is not simply or merely the record of the acts of the past, and the revelation of the responsibilities and duties of the present; but also as in a panorama it reveals in no misty atmosphere the glories, the perils, and the scenes of the future. The Bible is the very shadow of God himself, who was, and is, and is to come; the past, the present, and the future are reflected from it; and if we study it with that deep sense of its varied and inexhaustible treasures that we ought to cherish evermore, and that its Author warrants and requires us to entertain, we shall see the world that now is in a clearer light, ourselves charged with yet more solemn and responsible duties; and at the same time much in the future so clearly unveiled, that while it will not make us prophets, it will nevertheless give us what God means us to have—a glimpse of the certainty of those things that he has so fully predicted. I beg you will clearly understand that I do not seek in the

course of the remarks I shall make in this Lecture to prophesy; I am neither a prophet nor a prophet's son. All I attempt is humbly to unfold as far as I am able what God has been pleased to reveal of prophecy in reference to the future for our learning. What is a book printed for? That it may be read. What is it read for? That it may be more or less understood. Why has God inspired men to predict the future? Why has he inspired the sacred penmen to record the predictions of that future? Why has he commanded us to read them? Why has he pronounced a blessing upon them that do so? He surely intends that what he has predicted in reference to the future we shall in some degree apprehend, if not so clearly as to be able to delineate what is not yet come, at least so clearly as not to be in the dark about futurity. Of this we are satisfied, that heaven and earth may pass away, but one word shall not pass from this book till all be fulfilled. The humblest text that God has written is more lasting than the mightiest pyramid that Pharaoh built, or the noblest creation that genius has adorned the world withal. I entreat you again, at the risk of repetition, to remember that in my expositions of evangelical truth, of plain, Protestant, Scriptural Christianity, I know I am not wrong; I am absolutely certain I am right.



I do not announce that Christ died for my sins as probably true, but as absolute, vital, eternal truth. But in explaining predictions of the future, I feel and candidly own I may err in details, I may mistake references ; I am fallible, the subject is difficult ; I presume not to dogmatize or to dictate, I seek only to furnish *data* for conclusions, and to leave you to say the *data* prove, or they do not prove, that the predictions relating to this world's eve are fulfilling. If you are not convinced, it is either that I have failed to render my meaning as I could desire, or that the subject is still too difficult for me successfully to penetrate. If I do convince you, (and I think there is the highest possible probability that I shall,) then we shall look together into the future with that confidence with which Christians may hopefully gaze ; we shall see God irradiating the past with His deeds, the present with His glory, and storing the future with the fulfilment of His brightest and His dearest promises. The subject before us in this Lecture will necessarily lead me first of all to identify the names that are here given by the prophet. This may seem a dry and uninteresting work, but it is essential as the basis of the inferences I draw. It is necessary to notice first of all that the predictions herein given relate to the last days ; that they indicate the in-

cursion of a northern power armed with great vigour and gigantic resources, but doomed to perish ultimately in Palestine amid tremendous scenes, and under the immediate judgments of God; and all this to happen in the last days; that is, at or near the close of this dispensation. Partially it begins before; but it reaches its full maturity when the Jews are restored. Then the judgment descends, the northern power is crushed, and its successful march to Palestine is the preliminary to its utter destruction. Our first query will be, who are the nationalities represented by these names? It is now admitted that the reading of the second verse should be slightly different. Rosh in Hebrew means a prince or a chief as well as a race. It should therefore read, "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the prince or chief of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal." The question is, what are these names, and what nationalities do they represent? My identification of the names is not the result of trying to accommodate God's word to present eventualities; but of accepting what the most able geographers and ethnologists have independently ascertained before. From these I show that, viewed scientifically, irrespective altogether of the Scripture prediction, or of what the prediction applies to, these names are the represent-

atives of well-known nations now existing. The names here given are Gog, Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Persia, Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer, Togarmah, Sheba, Dan, and Tarshish. If we refer to the 10th chapter of the Book of Genesis, we shall there find the whole of these tribes mentioned, with the direction of their dispersion. "The sons of Japheth are Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah. And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided." I shall show you that the Hebrew word rendered "isles," or "islands," in our translation, is almost invariably applied to what we call the coasts or the sea-bord of a land. These were the races that were to people, we are told here, the isles of the Gentiles, the word *isles*, as I have intimated, meaning in Scripture almost invariably the sea-bord or the coasts. For instance, Tyre is represented as being on the isles of the great sea of Tarshish, or the Mediterranean; that is, on the coast. So you will find constant references to great towns and cities that are on the sea-bord, or the shores of the country, as being, according to the Hebrew usage, on the isles of the great sea. Now, if you will look into that valuable edition of the Scrip-

tures called Bagster's Pocket Polyglot Bible, you will find in the very first map in it an account of these peoples, specified by their names, covering the different localities over which they are said in Genesis to have been scattered. You find, for instance, the whole northern portion of Europe occupied by Tubal, by Meshech, and by Magog ; and these arrangements are accurately constructed from the sacred record. We find, accordingly, from this map, and tracing the history geographically, that Magog, one of the descendants mentioned in the 10th chapter of Genesis, settled on the east and north-east of the Euxine or the Black Sea, and part of the Russian Empire, including the rivers Don and Dnieper, and the neighbourhood of Caucasus. These tribes were all settled where they now exist in these very districts. Pliny, the Roman writer, says, " Hierapolis, taken by the Scythians, was afterwards called Magog," one of the names given here. Josephus, the Jewish historian, says, " The Scythians were called by the Greeks Magog." And the very name Caucasus, that we have read of so often in the papers, in their accounts of recent events, is derived from the two Oriental words Gog and chasan ; which means " Gog's fortified place." So that, whenever you read of the Caucasus, you read " the mountains of Gog's fortified place, or

Gog's fort;" the very name of these mountains indicating the family or race with which by proximity they were intimately associated.

Meshech, another of the Scripture names, is found under the name of the Moschi or the Mæsi, inhabiting the Moschic mountains, east of the Black Sea. Josephus says, that the Moscheni were founded by Meshech, and the Thobelites by Tubal. As if to show the identity, Tubal means, in Arabic, iron. The Greeks, deriving a name from the same source, called the same people Chalybs, the Greek word which also means iron or steel. Now, these two races, the descendants of Meshech and the descendants of Magog, are all found at this moment in the southern parts of the Russian Empire, in the provinces of Georgia, the Caucasus, and the Sea of Azoff, and on the Don and on the Dnieper. Their descendants penetrated into the deserts of Scythia, and peopled, subsequent to their first introduction, the northern parts of Russia. The Sarmatians, or the Muscovites, according to Herodotus, came from Pontus in Asia Minor, the very province in which they first settled, and to which we traced the descendants of Meshech and Tubal. The river Araxes, the modern name, was called in Arabic Rosh, and the people dwelling upon its banks were called by Orientals Rosh.

These are the progenitors, as proved not only from locality but from descent, of the Russians; the name Russian being derived from Rosh; Muscovy, or Muscovites, being derived from Meshech; and Tubal being the origin of Tobolsk. You may trace in short by names that exist in Russia, as well as by national and geographical distribution of races, the ancient arrangement specified clearly and distinctly in Genesis, and referred to by Ezekiel. Now these names and this identification, I have already said, are not formed to suit the Scriptures to present events. Bishop Lowth, than whom there was no more sober interpreter of prophecy, says, "Rosh, taken as a proper name, in Ezekiel signifies the inhabitants of Scythia, from whom the modern Russians derive their name." This is the judgment of a very wise and a very learned Bishop. Thus, taking the maps I have mentioned where the ancient dispersion is arranged; taking the lineal, genealogical descent of these heads or fathers of the nations, we arrive at the conclusion that Rosh, Meshech, Tubal, find their descendants at this moment in the northern and southern parts of Russia, by the Euxine Sea, the Sea of Azoff, and the Don, and the Dnieper, and among the Cossacks.

The next race mentioned is "Gomer and his

bands." Who is this Gomer with his bands, and in what locality do we find him? His three sons are mentioned in Genesis to have been Ashkenaz, which the Black Sea is sometimes called, Riphath, and Togarmah. Now it happens that Xenophon, Pliny, Strabo, Cicero, Josephus, and the modern Bochart, all state that Gomer's three sons settled in the territories of Asia Minor; but as matter of history the sons of Gomer soon extended beyond these, and appeared first in the Crimea, anciently called Cimmeria, derived from the name Gomer,—Gomeria passing into Cimmeria, and Cimmeria passing into the name Crimea. Advancing again along the Danube, these same descendants of Gomer peopled what is now called Germany, the name being derived from Gomer; Germany being not derived from the word *wehr*, but from Gomer, and is properly Gomer-land, or the land of Gomer. Some of the descendants of Gomer again spread into Gaul; and were called Galatæ from Galatia, whence they came, and Kalatæ and Celtæ or Celts; the name passing into the modern Celts, the inhabitants at this moment of the Highlands of Scotland. The ancient Britons, who are now in Wales, still call themselves Cymmry; a name evidently derived from Gomer. The ancient name of Wales is Cambria, which is derived also

from Gomer. And even Cumberland, into which many of the Gomerians or the inhabitants of Wales spread, literally means "Gomer-land." And Togarmah is identified by Wolf as the representative of the Tartar hordes, who, he says, when he visited Bokhara, and Khiva, and Kokand, were in the habit of calling themselves Togarmah.

We thus identify four of the leading powers; namely, Meshech, Tubal, and Rosh, and Gomer, chiefly Germany,—Togarmah and his bands.

Now the prophecy of Ezekiel is that Gomer,—that is, Germany, which is the great or the father-nation of all the rest—will be added to the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal; and that this combination of Germany and Russia will be the chief part of the great confederacy or conspiracy of the last days, that will go forth to cleave its way, as this chapter indicates, to the land of Palestine, there and then to perish for its crimes under the judgments of God. I do not say our existing complications are the fulfilment; because one does not like to dogmatize; but is it not remarkable that here the prediction is that Rosh, Meshech, Tubal, or Russia in all its divisions, and the descendants of Gomer, or the Germans, should coalesce, and form as one this great confederacy? Does it not look as if the fulfilment



were taking place before our eyes? Is not Prussia practically allied to Russia? Has not Austria, apparently neutral, aided Russia when it let loose the Russian forces from the Danubian provinces and principalities, and enabled the Autocrat to concentrate them with otherwise ineffective results against our gallant troops in the Crimea? And at this moment is it not the feeling of every reflecting man that, after all, Germany is not with us and will not be with us? I may ask, is it not at least, as the most sceptical before me will admit, a remarkable coincidence, that this prediction of Ezekiel, that Rosh, Meshch, Tubal, Gomer and all his bands, should be united together in one great confederacy, is at this moment almost a historical fact?

I take one step further, which I think is the most interesting of the whole; it is to try to identify and fix a power of the name of "Tarshish" singled out here, whose conduct seems to be altogether an exception. For what does it say in the 13th verse of this chapter? "Sheba and Dedan,"—Eastern nations, and in all probability associated with India,—“and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say to the prince of Rosh, Meshch, Tubal, and Gomer and all his bands,” in the language of taunting defiance, “Art thou

come to take a spoil? Hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take away a great spoil?" As much as to say, "We will wait a little; we are not quite sure that you will be allowed to have your own way in this matter. We understand your policy, we see your project; we do not agree to it; we choose to oppose it; and we speak therefore in the language of defiant sarcasm. Art thou come to take a spoil? You will find it is not so easily done; for we mean to muster all our forces, whatever they may be and from whatever source they may come, to oppose, and resist, and repel you." Now the remarkable fact is shown by Mr. Chamberlain, a most able writer upon the subject, to whom, in these observations, I am deeply indebted, that we cannot trace Tarshish genealogically. If you look into the maps in Bagster's Bible—which are so very correct and good—you will see the Mediterranean Sea, that vast sea, is called the Sea of Tarshish; and he proves, I think, to demonstration, what has so often been said, that Tarshish, which we cannot identify genealogically or by a nationality, is used in a figurative sense, and is the typical representative of a nation having the grand characteristics which Tarshish is said to have. In

reading the account of this power as described by Ezekiel, we find Tarshish represented as having the ablest seamen, and the command of the sea. One of the most proverbial expressions in the Old Testament is, "the ships of Tarshish," to denote an immense and powerful fleet. And as no separate nation can be specified to indicate Tarshish as a historic nationality, I think we must proceed, as Mr. Chamberlain, who has written upon that subject, suggests, to show that "Tarshish is used of a people not lineally descended from Tarshish in the 10th chapter of Genesis, but symbolizing a nation having the national characteristics of Tarshish."

Now let us notice the features which are attributed to Tarshish; and the discovery which results is, I think, most interesting to us. In the reign of Solomon, we read that ships went to Tarshish to bring "gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks." Volney, the infidel historian, very accurate as a historian, says, "This commerce under Solomon extended to India, and the Persian Gulf was the principal point of union, and the ships that went to Tarshish and Ophir were engaged in the East India trade." Such are the remarks of Volney. Scott, a most excellent commentator on the Bible, says on this passage; "The imports mentioned, apes and

peacocks, indicate that prosperity had enervated the minds of Solomon and his subjects, and led them to love things curious and uncommon, though useless in themselves; and indeed the East India trade has served to render every nation luxurious and self-indulgent that has prospered in it." He therefore views the ships of Tarshish as an actual nation, having in that day, what they have extended since, some great commercial transactions with the East. In various places of Scripture Tarshish is set forth as a place carrying on commerce with the East, especially the Indian Peninsula. I say the first inference to be gathered from the ships of Tarshish going to the East, bringing home these curious and rare things, is that it is some place mercantile, sea-faring, having commerce with the East. We read in Ezekiel xxvii. 12, "Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead they traded in thy fairs." To Tarshish as not a very distant place then, and found evidently in a westerly direction from Tyre, across the Mediterranean, Jonah fled. Jeremiah, again, speaking of Tarshish, says, "Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, the work of the cunning workman, and of the hands of the founder; blue and purple is

their clothing ; they are all the work of cunning workmen." Ezekiel mentions metals as imported from Tarshish ; and Jeremiah mentions it as evidently a manufacturing country. There is a typical application of Tarshish to Tyre, whose ships are called " the ships of Tarshish." " Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first." " The lions thereof,"—the lion is used in Scripture almost constantly as the symbol of what is warlike, fierce, formidable,— " the lions thereof " may therefore denote the warlike power of this country called Tarshish. And if " the lions thereof " should bear an heraldic meaning also, I need not add how applicable the reference would be. Combine all these features as the characteristics of Tarshish ; first, as a great people having commerce with the East ; secondly, a very commercial and mercantile people ; thirdly, warlike ; fourthly, manufacturers in metals and of textile fabrics ; and I think that our conclusion will not seem extravagant, that Tarshish is the type and symbol of Great Britain, with its Eastern dependencies.

" The country," says Bishop Horsley, on Isaiah xviii., " to which the prophet refers is characterized as one which in the days of the completion of this prophecy should be a great maritime and commercial power, forming remote

alliances, making distant voyages to all parts of the world with expedition and security, and in the habit of affording protection to friends and allies. This Tarshish is to play a momentous part in the last times—a part in which we and ours have a deep and solemn interest.

What is the inference now from the whole of this chapter? That Russia and Germany—Rosh, Meshech, Tubal, and Gomer with all his bands—will form a gigantic confederacy and conspiracy, headed by the prince of Rosh; or, translated into modern phrase, by the Autocrat of all the Russias; and that when this great conspiracy shall begin to move—not in the first instance designedly to occupy Palestine, and to prevent the poor Jew from returning to his home, but to detach the country of the Sultan from his crown, of which country Palestine is now a part, and to pre-occupy it for its own grasping, ambitious, and avaricious purposes;—a nation represented under the symbol, the type, or the figure of Tarshish,—commercial, mercantile, warlike, powerful, and in a westerly direction,—will meet foot to foot the leader of this great conspiracy, this aggressive confederacy, and will say to it in the language of defiance,—which at the beginning was, alas, too much the language of boasting,—“Art thou come to take

a spoil? Art thou to deprive the nations of their freedom, their existence; and to cleave thy way through Europe, in order to gratify thy pride and thy ambition? Wait till we see which of the twain is stronger, right or might, and whether we may not by God's blessing hurl you back to your northern deserts, and vindicate for Europe and all its nationalities their freedom and the enjoyment of their faith." Accordingly, when we turn to the chapter at the head of this lecture, we find the first seven verses indicating a preliminary preparation on the part of Russia. God says, "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, O Gog." And then he says, "I will turn thee back, and put hooks in thy jaws; and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords; Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands, and many people with thee." Now this seems to indicate that the northern confederacy will make a first

attempt to slake its terrible ambition ; and that this first attempt will be checked for a season. "I will turn thee back and put a hook in thy jaws." And it is upon this very verse that I build the inference that either there will be a lull or a quiet, which may not be a peace, or at least a victory gained over Russia, that will repress or arrest her ambitious designs for a season ; but only that, resisted for a little, she may accumulate in her frozen fastnesses more rapidly in secret and in quiet, eventually to come down like an Alpine avalanche upon the valley below, crushing all that are subject to its mass and force. After this pause, the evil thought comes back again into the mind of this same prince ; for we read in verse 10, "Thus saith the Lord God ; it shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought ; and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of un-walled villages ; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a spoil, and to take a prey." This seems to be another act in this aggression ; this power, arrested for a little, will not repent of its wickedness ; it will welcome back and give hospitality again to this evil thought of ambition, usurpa-



tion, and aggression, his disasters alike unprofitable and unsanctified to him. It is during this aggression that we read Tarshish with the young lions thereof steps in, as in verse 13, and meets this power, exclaiming, "Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?" It is thus that this powerful nation interposes, resists,—it is not said overcomes, but at least checks the aggressive career of the usurping Autocrat of the north, the prince of Rosh, of Meshech, and of Tubal.

The last act in the drama is given in this same chapter, and concluded in the following, the 39th, which should be read also; where we find that in spite of Tarshish, and his ships, and his soldiers, and all his resources, this northern power cleaves its way to the holy land of Palestine, a part of the Sultan's dominions, resolved to intercept the Jew from coming to his home; and there, so unholy, though predicted, is his career, that God pleads against him with pestilence and with blood, rains upon him overflowing rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. This last act of this solemn tragedy is not yet begun; but you will find, if I am correct in identifying Tubal, Meshech, and Rosh with

Russia; and Gomer and all his bands with Germany and its divisions;—and I think that there is the highest possible probability, from the facts, and coincidences, and ethnographical and geographical illustrations we have seen, that I am correct;—that after the lull that will take place—be it quiet, or be it peace, or be it the Czar beaten back into his own frozen recesses;—Russia will burst forth, overcome all resistance, march to Palestine; and, there unsuccessful in achieving the evil thing it had set its heart upon, it will learn that God will avenge his own by the most terrific judgments, which are described in the next chapter as being poured out upon that guilty and ambitious confederacy.

I am here giving you the simple interpretation of the chapter, irrespective of the events that are now taking place. Throughout the whole investigation, it seems to me so delightful that Tarshish stands aloof from, and opposes, the confederacy. Mr. Chamberlain tries to prove that France, who he says justly is sprung from Gomer, will be included in the confederacy or conspiracy. It is not so now; we see no signs of it at present; God forbid it should be so. But there seems to me a very high probability that Austria, or Gomer, as the eldest daughter of the Church,—the Romish sister, or the Greek Apos-

tasy, next,—and the Mahometans of the East, in the last place,—will all three yet coalesce; and that there will be our noble fatherland for God; for the Bible, for liberty, for life, faithful even to the last. If this be so, it gives us many precious comforts respecting our own country and its destiny in the future. I infer from other parts of the Bible that our country—that separated from the Apostasy at the Reformation and ceased to be one of the Ten Kingdoms, and is still the great protesting land,—will be spared amidst the judgments of God; will be chastened as a daughter or a son is chastened by a parent, but will not be cut off by an angry and an offended Judge.

The lessons that we have to learn in looking at the whole of this subject are, first, because Russia unconsciously fulfils the great mission chalked out for her in this very chapter, it does not follow that Russia is blameless. When I have mentioned these things in private, persons have said to me, “Oh then Russia is just doing what God has foretold.” In the first place ask the Czar, if you have the means, “Are you trying to fulfil Ezekiel?” He would smile at your fanaticism; he never dreamt of it; he never intended to do so, and in all likelihood he never read the prophet. God predicts in His word what He

does not applaud in His law. The Jews were predicted to crucify the Lord of glory ; but I am not to conclude, with a Right Honourable ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Notes upon the Life of Lord George Bentinck, that the Jews had part of the credit of that act because they crucified the victim-sacrifice. Surely that inference is utterly wrong—utterly wrong. On the contrary, “ With wicked hands ye have crucified and slain the Lord of glory, delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God.” In other words, the Jews were predicted to crucify Christ ; and yet in fulfilling the prediction of God they gratified their own instincts, and were guilty of a crime that has tracked their footsteps with a scathing curse for the eighteen centuries that have now elapsed. So that, because Russia is now fulfilling a prophecy, Russia is not therefore doing right or fulfilling her duty. And, in the next place, Russia is positively condemned in this chapter. For what does God say whilst He is predicting what Russia will do ? “ Behold, I am against thee, O chief of Rosh, and of Meshech, and of Tubal.” His ambitious, grasping power is “ an evil thought ” in his heart ; and He says the close of it all will be that judgment will descend upon him. It is our part to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God ; this is

our personal and national duty ; it is God's prerogative to fulfil His predictions in His own way, and when and where He thinks proper.

Our resistance of this aggression, on the supposition that Tarshish is the country typical of our own, is right in the light of duty, and it is indicated in the light of prophecy. I would not say that we ought to make ready to oppose the Russian aggression because God has predicted that Tarshish shall do so ; but I hold that in commencing this war—terrible as it is, unspeakably terrible—we were right ; it was in the sight of God inevitably our duty. I have no sympathy therefore with those who think that war is and can be never a nation's duty. War is an awful, a stern, a terrible thing ; but it does surely sometimes become duty ; and if all the people of this country were members of the Peace Society, Russia would make short work with us, and that too in a very few months. I hold therefore that our nation is engaged in what is its duty viewed in reference to law ; but I am the more delighted and comforted when I see that it is not only doing its duty, but that it has been taking the very place of destiny as well as duty predicted in the sacred word of God. This fact, that our brave soldiers have fought and fallen in the cause of the right against the aggres-

sions of might, does not dry the tears of them that are weeping, and like Rachel will not be comforted, over sons, and brothers, and fathers, and husbands, fallen on the high places of the field ; but it consecrates the loss ; it vindicates while it sanctifies their gallantry and heroism. The thought that the thing is right gives to the soldier's sepulchre the consecration of a martyr's grave ; and if this does not dry the tears of them that mourn for those whose shadows will be no more seen upon their thresholds, and whose accents will be no more heard sweet music beneath their roof-trees, it is some consolation that they have fallen where we should ever seek to live and be ever ready to die—at the post of duty in the providence of God.

If it should turn out, as I have indicated, that in spite of all and in the face of all our resistance Russia will yet cleave its way to Palestine, a course which you may say you see no indications of,—which may be true, as I am not explaining what is taking place now, but what is written in this chapter ;—if, I say, we should not succeed ; if we should be, what does not at present appear probable, driven from the Crimea ; if Russia should accumulate all her resources and swell the number of her gigantic armies, and even organize a fleet that may approach in size and efficiency our

own, and make her way to Palestine in spite of all ; then our comfort as a nation will be that we have done our duty. Service belongs to us, success rests with God. We are answerable for doing what is morally right ; God will take care to accomplish the issue that to Him seems best and most beneficent. But in doing the right as a nation we are securing immunity for ourselves. When the clouds of wrath, charged with righteous retribution, shall sweep with impetuous career through the sky of broad Europe, it is a delightful thought that the homes and the hearths of your children, if not of yourselves, will be sheltered by what our brave ones have endured and our gallant ones have done ; and all because they did their duty, and our nation accepted its responsibility, and took its place in this great war. It will be some comfort to reflect that we had fathers that were not ashamed of their country, who poured out their blood like festal wine to defend it ; and that we belong to a nation that dares not ignore its place or its trust. And our children will say over us, as they look upon the turf that grows green upon our ashes, " We will not barter away the birthright our fathers have bequeathed us ; if we cannot augment it, by God's grace we will not impair it."

We are as a nation at this moment aiding the

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restoration of the Jews. Perhaps we never meant to do so ; Russia never meant to resist it ; but as a nation we are engaged, by repelling the Russian aggression, in facilitating the restoration of the Jew, and the fulfilment of God's promises. In a former Lecture I read from a Jewish newspaper, called the Hebrew Observer, an extract, in which they say that of all things upon earth they deprecate the success of the Autocrat ; for success to him will be destruction to them. And they make the very remarkable statement, too, that the great mass of the Jewish nation is distributed throughout the dominions of the Sultan and of the Autocrat—the two nations now at war ; that under the Sultan, with all his fanaticism, they have found a shelter ; under the Autocrat they have incessantly been persecuted, and plundered, and maltreated ; and therefore they wish success to the Western Powers, and not to the Autocrat. We are told that God will bless them that bless Israel. There is a very stupid notion abroad, that because God has predicted that the Jews for eighteen centuries shall be a scoff, and a by-word, and be spit upon, and be treated as the offscouring of the earth, we therefore do well to treat the Jew with cruelty. They ask, “ Has not God predicted that the Jews will be so treated ? Are we not doing right in ful-



filling God's word?" . I answer, No ; God has predicted that they shall be so treated ; but He has promised a special blessing upon them that pity His ancient people, and try to do them good instead of studying to do them harm. If these things be so, what and how solemn is the crisis in which we now are ! Review the Lectures which I have given ; does not the inference on the whole preponderate in your minds that the evening twilight of life's long day is gathering round us ; that the shadows of things grow longer, darker, sharper, as they are spread over the earth ? When we look around us in the world, do not omens evil and prophetic of woe gather from every point of the horizon ? Are not shadows appearing on every part of the earth ominous of coming disaster ? Is it not literally true at this moment that statesmen, and rulers, and magistrates feel their hearts failing for fear of the things coming upon the earth ; and that men are in many provinces literally at their wits' end ? Do not all these things together indicate the high probability that we are approaching the close ? and if so, we Christians are called on to cherish the glorious hope that a brighter and a better day will supersede the one that is now waning.

In these Lectures I have tried sedulously not

to dogmatize where one should only meekly inquire ; I have tried to avoid every expression that might be construed as presumption. On some points I may be wrong ; I do not profess to be infallible ; but you will concur with me when I add that I have tried less to force conclusions upon your mind, and more to give the data and the elements for forming conclusions yourselves. And if we be now on the edge of a departing dispensation, and on the margin of a coming and a brighter one ; if our present position be wasted by the waters of time, and washed by the waves of the ocean of eternity ; if our stand-point at this moment be surrounded and encompassed by two eternities ; if either we may be snatched and taken—for we know not what a day may bring forth—to the judgment-seat, or the Judge may come to us ;—I ask, with all solemnity, as an ambassador of Christ, how stand you in reference to death, to judgment, to the future ? Is your hope a conjecture, a vague probability, a vulgar idea, that things may be better than you expect ? The Bible was written to show where my footing can be secure, to fill my heart with the glad sunshine of glory ; and to tell me what I must do here to be saved ; and how surely that salvation shall be found in a blessing hereafter. Are you convinced of your

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sins ; trusting in the precious blood of the only Saviour ? Are you—not merely baptized, or communicants—but are you regenerated in heart by the Holy Spirit, born again, and made the children of God ? Do I address any who take no thought about these things ?—how can you have a moment's quiet ? What is there between you and the judgment-seat ? That fluttering, feeble, frail thing called the heart. Often have I thought, when I have listened to the beatings of my own, the beat is life ; but the pause between the beats—are you aware—is death ? The heart gives its beat, and it seems as if it looked up to the God that made it, and said, “ Shall I give another beat ? ” And he says, “ Another.” “ Shall I give another ? ” And he says, “ Another still.” He waits to be gracious ; he is waiting for you to come home and be his son, his daughter, the heir of everlasting glory. Oh ! what a blessed thought it is, that there is not a human being that hears the gospel, who need not go home pardoned, sanctified, forgiven. Too many people have the idea that to be saved is a sort of long and laborious penance, or an arduous and difficult process. It is no such thing. It is, “ Look and live ; ” “ Believe and be saved.” Be happy first, and be holy as the instant effect, action, and evidence of that happi-

ness. I wonder how any man can live suspended between life and death, between heaven and misery, without something like clear, intelligent, rational conviction, that if he were called upon to appear at the judgment-seat to-morrow, he could say, "I know in whom I have believed, and that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him against that day." Do not regard religion as something sepulchral, something awful, something that makes the countenance clothe itself in gloom, or as fit to be associated only with sick-beds, and death-beds, and the grave. This is not Christianity. The first miracle of Jesus was wrought at a marriage-feast; Christianity dawned upon earth in the shape of a nuptial benediction. Jesus went to rejoice with them that do rejoice before he went to weep with them that do weep. And if there be one effect of Christianity more marked, decided, and impressive than another, it is that it makes its subject a happy man. This is its glorious attribute. And no man can be happy who is not a Christian—out and out, in heart and soul, a living, regenerated Christian. Have you not at times feelings of disquiet, a sense of dissatisfaction, a sort of feverish restlessness within that you cannot get rid of? What explains it? It is God's Holy Spirit persuading

your heart that this world is not your home, nor its sunniest spot your rest; and asking and entreating you not to dissipate the restlessness, and feverishness, and disquiet, you now feel by going to temporary excitements,—to the opera, to the theatre, to the dance, to the card-table, and other places that man has invented for soothing without sanctifying the restlessness of his heart. The Spirit bids you go to Him who will take your heart and sanctify it, who will enter your mind to enlighten it, who will take all your sins on His own body on the tree, and wash them away; and send you forth into the world with the magnificent and sustaining impression, “The everlasting God is my Father; infinitude is my home; eternity itself is my blessed and joyous life-time.” “Happy are that people who are in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.”

God is everywhere, and always acting. The foolish notion of some is that God made the world, wound it up like a watch, and then left it to uncoil itself as it may; or that he set the ship a-going, and then left it to make the best of its way to a haven. God is, and acts in all that is exquisitely minute, and in all that is magnificently great. God is as present to dry an orphan’s tear as he is to wheel that star in its

orbit, or to listen to yon archangel's song. He pours out every vial; He sounds every trumpet; He is disentangling every complication; He is over-ruling all things to the glory of His name and to the good of His cause. It is this thought that gives one abiding comfort. If you have a relative tossed upon the deck on a tempestuous sea, for instance on the inhospitable Euxine; if you have a near and dear one toiling or watching in the trenches or in the thin line of our highland countrymen at Balaklava; if you have a beloved friend amid all the perils of shot, and shell, and rifle;—you may be as convinced as you are of your own existence, that he can neither be touched by shot, or shell, or sabre, until the moment comes when God has no more use for him. What Louis Napoleon, the sagacious Emperor of the French, said—not, I fear, upon the same ground upon which I state it—is a magnificent truth, “I am immortal till I have finished my mission.” There has not a soldier fallen in the Crimea who had not first finished his mission. I should feel, I fancy, if I were there,—though, of course, nerve has a great deal to do with it, and I admit it is not always equal to, and in tone with, moral conviction,—provided I could persuade myself that I am at the post of duty, that I am as safe as if I were sitting in my own study

or lying on my own bed. Hence, Martin Luther replied, when they said to him, "Do not enter Worms, Luther, or the Pope and his priests will kill you." "If there were as many priests and devils in Worms as there are tiles upon the houses, it will not alter me. My duty bids me go; and where God sends me in His providence He will protect me by His power." So you should feel; so we should all feel in reference to the future—that we are all safe, all immortal, till God has nothing more for us to do. And then, when the sentinel is taken from his post, when the watchman is taken from his beat, each feels he wants to rest. And when God has nothing more for us to do as Levites in this outside world, we naturally wish to be taken home to our better service, where we shall rest from our labours, and our works do follow us. In a tempestuous sea the master of a ship had a little boy, his son, acting as one of his crew. The waves rose mountains high, the wind blew a perfect tornado. The captain of the ship was at the helm; his little sailor-son was walking the deck, and walking it with all the composure and the self-possession of a young British seaman. One of the passengers, alarmed and agitated, said to the boy, "My boy, are you not afraid, while the ship is tossed like a feather, and every hol-

low of the ocean threatens to engulf her—are you not afraid?” “Afraid,” said the little boy, “no, not at all. My father is at the helm.” Our Father is at the helm ; all is safe ; the haven will be reached ; winds and waves must help us, and all things ever did and ever will work together for good to them that love that Father, and are the called of God according to his purpose.\*

\* I am deeply indebted in this Lecture to Chamberlain, to whose able and conclusive work on the Restoration of the Jews I refer the reader.



## VIII.

### LESSONS.

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?” 2 PET. III. 11.

PPETER states in the previous part of the chapter that the world that then was, or the age and dispensation previous to the Flood, perished or passed away when it was overflowed with water. He then states that the heavens and the earth—that is, the atmosphere, the visible expanse, and the round orb on which we tread, as it is in our translation, “are kept in store, reserved unto fire;” or, as literally translated, are stored with fire, reserved “against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” This alteration in our translation—which is the exact rendering of the original words—is confirmed by the most recent scientific inquiry. It happens that for every given depth—I forget the precise depth—to which you penetrate towards the centre of the globe, the heat of the earth increases

in a given ratio ; and if we could descend deep enough, it is supposed by eminent physiologists that we should find our earth on which we tread is merely a solid crust two or three miles thick, and that the interior is one rolling, restless flood, like the lava that pours from Vesuvius ; finding its occasional safety-valve in the volcano, but stored there, in the language of Peter, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. So true it is that the testimonies of Scripture and the findings of the maturest science are always found to coalesce. Whenever science says, "This is our discovery, and this discovery contradicts a clear, unequivocal text in the Bible," do not instantly agree with the scientific man and admit it is so ; but say, Wait ! the Bible is perfect ; science is imperfect. In the Bible there is progress, for it is a revelation ; in science there is progress, for it is human discovery ; and the end will justify the prediction, that when the scientific man has thought a little longer, he will find that what he dreamed was opposition to the Bible is really illustrative of its truths, and evidence of the one grand and Divine original. He then states that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night," in unexpectedness ; or, as our Lord says, like the lightning darting from the east to the west in its splendour. And in

that very day the heavens, the atmosphere,—for this is what we understand by “heavens” in the New Testament, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;”—“the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein”—“its gorgeous towers, its cloud-capped palaces,” as the poet says, —“the earth and the works that are therein—shall be burned up.” It is a very remarkable fact, that fire has been proved by the experience of the naturalist to be one of the great elements of fertility; and as we know that this old earth is to be regenerated into a new one, and that the process is a fiery baptism through which it will pass, being burned with fire, we can see in the very process the evidence of what the physiologist has frequently referred to,—that this dread, fiery baptism will prepare our earth for waving with all the fruits of Eden, and reflecting beneath heaven’s bright sunshine all the fruitfulness and flowers of Paradise. It is also a very remarkable fact, that a world on fire is not a new thing. The celebrated French astronomer Laplace has counted eighteen orbs in the sky that have been in a state of combustion. He watched a star or world probably as big as our own, and saw it first of all assume a dark, smoky aspect;

then become intensely red ; then burn with a white heat ; and finally disappear, if not from its orbit, at least from his vision, he knew not how or where, for he saw no more of it. This eminent astronomer witnessed this phenomenon in at least eighteen instances. And therefore orbs subjected to the action of fire—the prediction of St. Peter in reference to our own—is not an unlikely thing, but a discovery that science has already made. This does not, indeed, make this prophecy more sure ; but it shows the maturest findings of science vindicating the possibility of what is predicted in the word of God.

The moral inference that Peter draws from all is, “ Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be that know this, in all holy conversation and godliness ? ”

Before I unfold the inference or question addressed by Peter, I should like to notice, very, very briefly, the leading points I have brought forward in the course of these seven Lectures. In the first I vindicated the study of prophecy from the misapprehensions of many, and from the misrepresentations of a few ; and showed the distinction,—broad, deep, and unmistakeable,—between the prophet who predicts things to come, and the expositor of prophecy who tries to unfold things that are already predicted. I wish all

specially to keep in mind this very important distinction ; it is one thing to sit in the prophet's chair and predict ; it is quite a different and a very much more humble thing to kneel at the footstool of grace and seek light, and labour to explain what the prophet has predicted, and God has written for our learning. The first it is blasphemy to pretend to ; the second it is duty to attempt. If we fail, the failure in any one instance should not discourage ; but rather, as the wreck in the channel with the buoy floating over it shows the course that other ships are to follow with greater safety, so the incidental error of the one generation may be the warning to the students in the next ; and the ultimate result may be a clearer, deeper, fuller apprehension of the mind of the Spirit of God.

In my second Lecture I specified, as laid down in the sacred page, the marks and characteristics of the eve or the twilight of this present dispensation. I noticed the prediction of " earthquakes in divers places ; pestilences, wars, signs in the sun and in the moon, distress of nations, perplexity." I called your attention to the daily papers as the most authentic evidences of prophecy translated into history. For what is history ? Prophecy fulfilled. What is prophecy ? History in the future. What is the best proof

of prophecy fulfilling? The pages of Gibbon, Hume, Alison, Macaulay in the past. What is the best evidence of prophecy fulfilling now? The correspondents in the columns of any one of our respectable daily morning newspapers. I have adduced first of all remarkable occurrences of earthquake upon earthquake in almost every quarter of the globe within the last eighteen months. I met the difficulty that occurs to most minds; namely, that there have been earthquakes during the last eighteen centuries. This is no doubt true. But our blessed Lord, who predicts earthquakes in divers places as an evidence of the nearness of the end, knew all this as well as the objector; and yet he lays down the prediction that earthquakes in divers places will be one of the signs of the nearness of his approaching advent. I noticed also the fact of famines and pestilences in divers places during the last five or six years; there is scarcely a nation in the world that has not been recently scourged, and even now, as in Spain, is scourged, by the most destructive and fatal epidemics. I do not dare to assert that these facts and phenomena in the outer world are beyond all doubt the fulfilment of the predictions of our Lord in the inner book; but I ask you under a sense of responsibility to compare the written prophecy

within with the actual occurrences without; and I leave it to yourselves with these *data* to draw the inference that seems just. Are we approaching the end? or are the predictions of the end neither met nor exhausted by anything that has yet occurred?

In my next Lecture I introduced the moral signs of the approach of the end, as these were indicated by our Lord, and might be deciphered from various parts of the Old and New Testament prophecy. I noticed the wide-spread almost universal disquiet, the feverish restlessness, that seems to rock and agitate all the nations of the earth; the complications between the East and the West, in France, in England, in Germany, in America, and in Italy, and over all the world; statesmen at their wits' end; cabinets not knowing how to decide or in what direction to move. I remarked on the rapidity with which events seem to rush to their fulfilment; as if the wheel became accelerated in its revolutions the nearer it approaches to its resting-place. I then showed the evidence of all things apparently concentrating, converging to a focus; as if this, in the language of Dr. Arnold, were to be the last stage of the modern history of mankind. I referred to the remarkable prediction of Daniel, "Many shall run to and fro,"

as a startling sign of the end. I noticed the universal disposition to travel, the unprecedented facilities for it ; the wonderful fact that a whole village can move itself 500 miles away with the speed and precision of a weaver's shuttle. I noticed the evidence of the fulfilment of the other prophecy, " Knowledge shall be increased," in the great thirst for knowledge over all the earth, the growing efforts to diffuse it more widely, the dangers which attend those efforts ; but still the obvious fulfilment of the prediction that " Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." At this moment the ocean is almost as populous as the land. The gigantic steamers that are afloat carry little villages within them ; the libraries of the world are read upon the sea, whilst the voyager is moving at the rate of 15 or 16 miles an hour. The railways spreading their network over all the earth ; the electric telegraph, touched in the trenches of Sebastopol and delivering its message in six hours in the Cabinet of St. James' ;—these things are evidences of a new era, and whether we are near the end or remote from it, they are the brilliant and startling proofs that prophecy is fulfilled. I noticed, in the next place, the remarkable fact, that the great epochs of prophetic chronology are all rapidly intersecting each other at this

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moment: I noticed that the 1260 years that limit the duration of the Western Apostasy in its full tide, beginning at 530, terminated amid the convulsions of 1790. I noticed the additional 30 years that Daniel specifies as being added to it; these 30 years ending just when the Mahometan power in Europe begins to disappear; or at the terminating year of the 2300<sup>th</sup> years, the other period of Daniel, dated from the meridian glory of the Persian empire, and both run out in 1820; when the sanctuary was to begin to be cleansed. Then I noticed Daniel's second addition of 45 years more, which would bring us down to 1865. Fynes Clinton in his *Fasti* shows, by the detection of an error in the accredited chronology, that 6000 years expire in 1862; and that the seven thousandth year of the world, according to his chronology, begins then; all the Jews, all their eminent scholars, all the early Fathers of the first three or four centuries, believe that the seven thousandth year of the world is to be what the Apostle Paul calls in our translation—"the rest," but what is in the original "the sabbatismos—the sabbath keeping—that remaineth for the people of God." Taking all these dates thus rushing to a close, and all these facts elucidating the accuracy of these calculations, I drew the inference that if 1865 be

not the close of the 6000 years, and the commencement of the millennial rest,—the sabbatismos,—that remaineth for the people of God, which I dare not assert ; the extraordinary harmony of all the dates, combined with the visible phenomena now transpiring everywhere, if no fulfilment of the predictions that indicate the end, should at least awaken in our hearts the first anticipatory echoing accents, “ Behold, the Bridegroom cometh ; ” —or the warning cry that is announced at the close of the sixth vial, “ Behold, I come as a thief ; blessed is he that watcheth.”

I brought before you in my next Lecture the evidence of the action of the sixth vial, the Apocalyptic symbol for a new date with new phenomena in the providential government of God, which began to be poured out just at the time that Daniel’s second period ends, namely, A. D. 1820, at which his great period of 2300 years ends also : and if the great river Euphrates be, as I showed it must be, the representative symbol of the Turco-Mahometan power in Europe, you may expect by its drying up to find the gradual exhaustion of that power, or, translated into the modern newspaper phrase, the waning of the Crescent, or the decay of the Turco-Mahometan dynasty in Europe. Accordingly we come to 1820. The terminating epochs

confirm the propriety of the eras fixed for the commencement of those epochs. We find in 1820, by contemporaneous testimony, that in the spring of that year the Mahometan Empire in Europe had reached its meridian ; strong within, and impregnable from without. You trace its history a little further, and you find in the autumn of 1820 province after province dislocates itself from the Turkish Empire in Europe ; revolt after revolt takes place ; till from 1820 downward to the present year you trace the decadence of that empire in Europe ; and at this moment the testimony of the correspondents of the daily papers is unanimous that the next perplexing question for the Cabinets of Europe will be, who is to occupy the dead man's place, so long the sick man's bed, and what nationality is to have possession of Constantinople, with all its antecedent and traditional glory ? Russia made the attempt to seize it ; the first Napoleon in former days longed to hold it ; it will be the next great quarrel, probably, who shall have it. A worse tenant it cannot have than the present ; we hope and pray that an enlightened Christian race may worship in the Mosque of St. Sophia, consecrated again to be a temple of the living God. I showed from the proofs given in the daily papers that the last pools of the Euphrates

are now almost disappearing in its channel ; that the great mass of the Turkish families are crossing the Bosphorus ; that when you ask them why, they cannot answer, except that the Giaours are come ; if you ask them what impels them to emigrate, they have, according to their notion of fatalism, an idea that their reign and empire in Europe is now vanished ; and the newspaper correspondents, without ever having probably read the Apocalypse, make the remark that the Turk has been encamped in Europe, and he is now plainly returning to his original source, crossing the Bosphorus to Asia, where alone his native place and his habitation are. I gave next the evidence which I read from some admirable reports of the American missionaries, that the dead Churches of the East are being quickened, that the decaying Churches are being revived, that Protestant Churches are planting themselves all over Constantinople, Broussa, Erzeroum, Adrianople, and all the leading places around that once celebrated sea. And Dr. Pomeroy, a celebrated American clergyman, only six weeks ago gives his testimony in these words :

“ One fact of special interest, in connexion with our missions in Western Asia, is every day becoming more apparent. It is this ; the Mohammedan mind of the Turkish Empire is gradually but surely being

reached and affected by the gospel. The word of God is sought for and read to an extent unknown before. An increasing number of the followers of the false Prophet listen to the proclamation of mercy, and are ready to converse on the claims of Christianity; and here and there, at different stations, individuals are found who give evidence of having become true converts to the cross. Whether the death penalty for renouncing Mohammedanism will be put in execution, remains to be seen. That events of great moment and surpassing interest are gathering about these ancient lands where the gospel achieved its early triumphs, is too apparent to admit of doubt."

Now take all these things together; first, the Turk exhausting his race by the sensual habits in which he indulges; secondly, the emigration that is continuous from Europe into Asia, accumulating every day; thirdly, the mixture of the Western races with the Eastern, and the desecration in a Mahometan's mind of all he holds dear and sacred by the contact; and, in the next place, the wasting of plague, of famine, of pestilence, of war; and, in the last place, the growth over all that empire of a young, a vigorous, and a hopeful Christianity; and the looming question for the Cabinets of Europe to settle will be, Who is to hold the key of Europe, Asia, and the Mediterranean; the Russian, with his savage despotism, advancing barbarism, or an enlightened Christian

people, the friends and allies of the free, the religious, and the great?

In my next Lecture I brought before you the interesting fact, that just in the ratio in which this river Euphrates, the symbol of the Turkish power, dries up, the way or road is prepared for the return of the kings of the east. I identified these kings from the sunrising, which is the literal translation, with the Jews; and I drew the inference, that if the waning of the Mahometan Crescent be now going on, we may expect that the Jews will begin to take an interest in the land of Palestine, over which the Euphratean flood has so long spread, and now under the domination of the Sultan; and will talk of returning to that land which is theirs by deeds more ancient than the title-deeds of the noblest houses of England. Believing this to be the era of their movement, we look round and we notice, first, a deepening interest expressed in the destiny of the Jews by all branches of the Christian Church; secondly, more converts made from Judaism during the last eighteen years than during the last eighteen hundred before; thirdly, more Jews suffered to dwell in Jerusalem, from which they were precluded and excluded for many centuries, during the last fifty years, than have dwelt in it during the last eighteen hundred

years; the Jews themselves organizing agricultural colonies in Palestine; taking possession of Palestine; recording in their newspapers the tidings of their success; and finally, what I have heard, a distinguished and wealthy Jew ready to deal with the Sultan, to advance him abundance to carry on the war, if Palestine can be given as the pledge that the money will be repaid. I noticed the singular fact that every Jew is ready to move at a day's notice. The nobles and country gentlemen of England cannot take their broad acres, their splendid halls, with them; they are the fixtures, if I may so speak, of the land. But every Jew carries his property in a portable shape. Now how do you account for this extraordinary fact, that here is a race that has been persecuted by every nation upon earth, and yet, like its forefathers in Egypt, it has multiplied under the persecutions dealt it? How can you account for this extraordinary fact, that this race, distinct from the nations, insulated from them all, adhering to its ancient traditions, and its holy and inspired record, has not received property in the world that attaches the race to the soil, but is the great money-lender of the world, and has all its wealth, if I may use the expression, in its purse—how can you account for this, save on the hypothesis that they wait

the signal, hung from the sky, that will be to them like the pillar of fire by night, and the pillar of cloud by day; their apprehension of which will induce them to arise from the East and the West; from the thralldom of the Sultan, from the persecution of the Czar; and to commence homeward that majestic exodus, in comparison of which the exodus from Egypt shall not be worthy for a moment to be mentioned. And you recollect that in this Lecture also I showed you the texts that prove, I think, irrefragably the fact, that the Jews are not simply to be converted to Christianity, but are first to be restored to their own land, and in that land to see Him whom they pierced and mourn; and be in Him accepted, and justified, and sanctified, and blessed.

In my next Lecture I showed the proofs of the decline of Babylon, of the judgments of God being poured out upon it, of its coming into remembrance now before God. I stated this was under the seventh vial, which I assumed to have begun in 1848, when its first shock was felt throughout Europe; and that during it "Great Babylon came into remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath;" and that just previous to her fall, recorded in the 17th chapter of the



Apocalypse, the warning voice is addressed to God's people in her, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." I proved by irresistible figures—the most powerful logic of all—that at this moment the Church of Rome is in a minority throughout the world; that there are more Christians in the world opposed to the supremacy of Rome than there are attached or allied to it; and that instead of that Church being, as you hear vaunted in every newspaper, a great majority of the Christian world, she can be proved by rigid figures to be in a minority of some 20 or 30 millions. I showed you the evidence of her decay from 1790, when the first period of 1260 years expired. In 1790 there were in Paris 5000 officiating priests; Paris has doubled in population since that day; at this moment there ought to be, therefore, 10,000 priests in Paris; but there are only 800. I noticed the very remarkable fact, that in the city of Rome, where the Pope has it all his own way, where there are no intrusive heresies, no disturbing schism; and where the whole system has the advantage of the presence of the Vicar of Christ; where there is a priest for every 70 people, and an ecclesiastical teacher of some sort for every 30 people; and where, therefore, Romanism has

had a long trial and a fair field for her experiments;—yet in Rome at least half the population are sceptics; probably a fourth of that population may be Christians; and, I dare say, nine-tenths of the population, if it were not for French bayonets and French battalions, would get rid of Pio Nono, the Vicar of Christ, to-morrow. Mr. Bowyer, my old correspondent in 1850, stated in the House of Commons in Aug. 1855, that the “Pope is the most popular sovereign in Europe.” Has Mr. Bowyer read the Pope’s recent allocutions in reference to Spain, Switzerland, and Sardinia? They prove precisely the opposite. Now what does this prove? That all over Christendom, east and west, north and south, that system is numerically losing, or morally effete. In France the sagacious and powerful Emperor uses the Pope and the Bishops and the Archbishops of the Church of Rome in France simply as state-puppets, or as a convenient political machine. The other day he instructed the Pope to consent to the secularization of his government. In Austria the Romish Church is merely a state concern; it has no freedom beyond what the reigning powers permit. And at this moment, if we may judge from the moral state of the capitals and chief cities of Austria, the Church

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of Rome, instead of having been a blessing, has rather been a curse, to that oppressed and despotic country. If you go to Ireland, our own sister-island, partly by emigration, partly by famine, partly by fever, but to a great extent by actual, living, evangelical conversion, the two creeds at this moment are nearly equal. Take Episcopalians, the Presbyterians, the Independents, the Wesleyan Methodists, and the Baptists,—all Protestant sects together in Ireland,—(and there sects or divisions of Christians rarely quarrel; for the great enemy that has been so near to them has kept them in harmony, and peace, and brotherly love;)—and you will find at this moment that matters are very much altered since the day when the late Mr. O'Connell said that the Roman Catholics were 8,000,000, and the Protestants only 1,000,000. The Roman Catholics are reduced to 3,000,000; and the Protestants have increased to upwards of 2,000,000. And as I know from the very best testimony, so little is the confidence of the Irish peasantry in the honesty of their priests, that, when they emigrate to America and send home money for their relatives to enable them to come out after them, they intrust the money invariably to the Protestant rector, rarely or never to the Roman Catholic priest to whom they confessed their

sins, and from whom they once sought absolution. I noticed the interesting fact which the Hon. Abbot Lawrence, late American Ambassador, mentioned to me, that if the emigrants from Ireland to America remain Roman Catholics, as they rarely do after they have reached its free shores, their children invariably become Protestants; but that in numerous instances, he says, —too numerous to mention,—the Roman Catholic peasant who has escaped from Ireland and reached the free shores of America throws off the Romish creed with the recollections of the land he belongs to, and becomes a Protestant, and in many an instance the most excellent and exemplary. And what has the Papal Aggression proved to be? A gigantic blunder. You find a certain number of gentlemen who call themselves the bishops of certain dioceses; and do so in the face of the law of the land; thus openly violating a law they ought to be the foremost to sustain and support, and thereby losing moral power. You find Dr. Wiseman, their head, so little satisfied with his progress, that he is intending to emigrate to Rome, to find a home and employment there. And since 1850 it has been demonstrated by results that the greatest blunder Infallibility ever perpetrated—and of all blunderers Infallibility has been the

greatest in the world—was the Papal Aggression of 1850.

In my last Lecture I showed that the powers indicated in Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix. were "the prince of Rosh," or Russia; "Tubal," Tobolsk; "Meshech," Muscovy; "Gomer and his bands," or the Germans; and that these were to be associated with the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal; and I drew this inference not by fitting ancient prophecy to modern facts, but by elucidating the plain statement of Scripture, and its coincidence with modern facts. I showed in the course of that Lecture that in all probability Russia is the great power that is to disturb Western Christendom, and to finish its ambitious career upon the plains of Palestine. I showed that there was intimation in that chapter of a check in the midst of its career; that that check shall be given by a maritime, commercial, colonizing nation, having relations with the East, called figuratively Tarshish; that this power denotes in all probability Great Britain; and I stated also from that chapter that Great Britain would itself be exempt from the judgments which should light upon the rest of the nations of the earth when that power, checked for a little, should accumulate into a more gigantic avalanche on its frozen hills, and precipitate

itself with irresistible destruction where the war began, and where the war will have its close,—near the walls of Jerusalem, and by the banks of Jordan.

These were the expositions, more or less imperfect, I endeavoured to lay before you. It now remains for me to draw from all I have said a few plain, practical, and personal lessons, fitted I trust by God's blessing to edify the minds of the people of God.

If the earth is to be dissolved; if fires are accumulated in the recesses that are to rend it to pieces; if all the shadows rising from beneath the horizon indicate the day is nearly spent and the evening is fast at hand; if this earth with all things that are in it is to be dissolved; if your estates must change owners; if your acres must be taken from you, or you from them; if your wealth must take wings and fly away; and if learning dies and beauty fades, and all things corruptible give token of their evanescence and decay; if the awful words, "I will overturn, I will overturn," seem to be sounding through the earth till their echoes crash against thrones and falling dynasties and a disorganized world, telling how powerfully they have struck; then, "what manner of persons ought we," that know these solemn facts, "to be, in all holy conversa-

tion and godliness?" Where are your hearts at this moment? Are you trying to satisfy their gigantic capacities from this world? Are you seeking to slake the thirst of immortality by draughts from the springs of this world? It is evidence of man's fall that he seeks to satisfy his soul from earth; it is evidence of the grandeur of man that all that is in the earth cannot satisfy that soul, or fill its deep and unfathomable capacities. Let the earth be our footstool when we pray; but let our hearts and our treasure be where the throne is. This old weary earth can give us but a grave; it is that new heaven and new earth that will give us an everlasting home. Regard this world as a pilgrimage, this body as a tent; the future, with its approaching glory, magnificence, and greatness, as your happy and your eternal abode.

I have shown you that all visible Churches are to be broken up. The Church of Christ never can fail; but the organizations that we call Churches I showed are all, if the prediction was fairly interpreted, as I believe it was, to be broken up. What evidence have you of it at this moment? The Church of England seems to be fermenting till the tremendous explosion comes which rends it in twain. The Scottish Church began its great change ten years ago;

and the secession of many mistaken but excellent men weakened it. The Methodists have been breaking up for several years; the Free Church, the last ecclesiastical secession in Scotland, is all but rent in twain; and disorganisation, chaos, and conflict seem raging in its very bosom. The evidence, therefore, is irresistible that all visible Churches are to be broken up. And what are they at best? mere provisional arrangements till the true Church come down from heaven, ready as a bride adorned for the bridegroom. If this be true, what ought to be our feeling in reference to them? Not to glory in them; still less to say there is only salvation in our Church, and there is no salvation outside. We may prefer the Church we belong to, and yet we need not be bigoted or exclusive. We may be liberal in the largest sense of that word, but we need not be latitudinarian. But above all fix your hearts, not upon the institution of the Church, but upon the object that the Church was appointed to exhibit—Christ Jesus, and him crucified. Whenever a Church begins to talk too much of itself, it is a sign it is losing vital force; whenever a minister preaches in the pulpit the Church, the Church, it is time that another were in his place preaching Christ alone, all our salvation and all our desire. The best



Church, and the one that bears the most vivid impress of its heavenly original, is that which leads the greatest number of sinners with the greatest simplicity and with the greatest success to the knowledge and enjoyment of eternal life. The best corn-field is that which grows most corn at least expense; the best vineyard is that which grows the most grapes of the richest flavour and with least trouble; the best corn-mill is that which grinds most corn and makes the least noise while it does so; and the best Church is that which preaches Christ most and says least about itself while it is engaged in doing so. But if all visible Churches are to be broken up, you ask, what are we to do—leave them? No; that is not necessary. Help to destroy them? That is sinful; it is God's prerogative to fulfil his own predictions; it is our privilege to discharge the duties that he has devolved upon us. What are we to be, then? Not ecclesiastics, there is plenty of them; not Churchmen, they are not scarce; not Dissenters, they are plentiful: what we are to be is Christians,—still a little company in the midst of a world that knows them not, as it knew Him not. If all visible ecclesiastical organizations — Church of England, Church of Scotland, Church Independent, Wesleyan, and Baptist—are to be broken up in order to give

place to a nobler, that man cannot make, and ought not to try to make, but which God will send down in His grace and His loving-kindness from heaven ; let us think less of being Churchmen, or of being Dissenters, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, or Baptists ; and be more anxious to be what was first at Antioch, and shall be last on earth—Christians, or followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We have seen that great Babylon is to be broken up and destroyed. If this be the case, and it is to be consumed, what should it teach us ? What manner of persons should we be ? What course of conduct should we pursue ? First, surely it is not our duty to support it. This is neither our duty, nor will it lengthen the existence of Babylon a single day. Nor, secondly, is it our duty to persecute it ; that would be to take weapons from her armoury as unchristian as her own. Then what is our duty ? To call to all that are at this moment in the Church of Rome, whether sprinkled by her baptismal waters, or imitating within another Church her forms, her ceremonies, her pomp, and her grandeur, to come out of her, lest partaking of her sins they receive also of her plagues. The apocalyptic appeal speaks of two classes that partake of Babylon's sins ; not simply those that are in

her, and now of her, but some that are external to her, partaking of her sins ; who are called, and earnestly implored, to renounce all approximation to Rome ; and to increase to the utmost their approximation to Christ and Him crucified. We are called upon, in the prospect of her near decline, to be ourselves decided in our attachment to the truth ; to be Protestants in the noblest sense of that expression ; not political Protestants, not fierce and fanatic propagandists, not sectarian partisans ; but men that see the truth clearly, that hold it fast firmly, and are not ashamed to tell the wide world itself, " We know in whom we have believed ; and that He is able to keep what we have committed to Him against that day."

We have seen that the Turkish empire in Europe is to disappear, and the Euphrates to be wholly dried up. But what is this to prescribe to us ? Let us aid those increasing institutions which at this moment are labouring to spread living Christianity through the lovely lands of Eastern Christendom. And it is most delightful to notice that the Church of England has resolved to build a Protestant Church in Constantinople. The American missionaries in great numbers have been labouring there and with great success for many years. The Scottish

Church has just begun in its last General Assembly to moot a movement for sending a missionary to Turkey, or at least to Constantinople. And a Society has recently been formed in London to aid the American missionaries in Western Asia to spread the gospel throughout Eastern Christendom ; a Society of which a nobleman, distinguished for his philanthropy and piety, is at the head, and to which many have contributed. Our duty in reference to Turkey as Christians is to spread the gospel in it ; the duty of the governments of Europe we can neither here discuss nor pretend to dictate or prescribe.

Are these events making way for the return of the Jews ? Is Russia at war with Turkey ; Turkey waning, crumbling to ruin ? are the convulsions and the agitations of all Europe in every quarter, east and west, and north and south, predicted to facilitate the exodus of the Jews from the graves in which they have been buried ? Let us as a nation help the Jews home ; let us as Christians try to enlighten them in the knowledge of Christ, the Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel.

Such are the simple lessons that we draw from the great facts that we have been considering in the page of prophecy. In the prospect of those great changes, those solemn and momentous

changes looming in every point of the horizon; let me ask, Do you seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, that all other things may be added? In the selection of a minister of the gospel take the most eloquent if you can, but hear rather the ungifted, faithful expositor of the truth than the most eloquent champion of deadly error. In the selection of a school for your children, select that in which accomplishments will be taught in their greatest excellence; but rather take a school where living religion dominates and the accomplishments are fewer and inferior, than where the accomplishments are everything and living religion nothing at all. In the selection of a house, choose the cheapest, with the loveliest lands, the healthiest situation; but, oh, do not omit to select one where you are within reach of a gospel ministry, and where you may have some of the means of doing good. Do not exclude human elements; it would be want of common sense to bid you do so; but seek first the kingdom of God; let religion dominate, as the main thing, the first thing, the chief thing. In forming connexions in this present life, let wealth, beauty, position, if you like, have a place; but let the requirement of a soul enlightened and a heart regenerated have THE place. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his right-

eousness, and all other things will be added." In prospect of those things that are coming upon the earth let me urge as the Apocalyptic duty specially prescribed at the close of the sixth vial, "Watch—watch. What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." Watch against the incursions of evil; watch over the maintenance of all that is good and holy within you; watch lest your affections cling too tenaciously to things that perish while you touch them; lest your heart be seeking to satisfy its thirst from the broken cisterns of this world; watch against Satan as an angel of light, or as a roaring lion; watch against the miasma of sin, the infection of error; for they only conquer who continue still to watch. Let me prescribe, in the prospect of those things that are coming on the earth, Hold fast. This is another of the Apocalyptic prescriptions. Hold fast the Bible as the depository of everlasting truth. Whatever is inside your Bible is true, essential, precious, if all men should contradict it. Whatever is outside the Bible may be beautiful, expedient, good; but it is not essential, though all men should assert it. Hold fast that great truth, justification by faith alone in the righteousness of Christ alone. What a precious truth is here! "Christ who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the right-

eousness of God by Him." I know no text that so completely expresses justification by faith in Christ's righteousness as that one text at the close of the 5th chapter of 2 Corinthians. Christ was made sin for me. How was He made sin? Not by being a sinner; not by thinking, speaking, or doing sin; for He was infinitely spotless. Then how was He made sin? My sin was imputed to Him; He bore our sins; on Him were laid the iniquities of us all. Well, in the same sense I am made righteousness by Him. What sense is that? By His righteousness being imputed unto me. And mark the happy inference. As it was just in God to let forth the expressions of His anger upon Christ because my sins were on Him, it will be but faithful and just in God to let forth the expressions of His love because of Christ's righteousness upon me. When Jesus died upon the cross there was nothing in Him worthy of death; when I shall be admitted into glory there will be nothing in me worthy of eternal life. He died not because of sin in Him, but because of my sin on Him; I shall be glorified, not because of righteousness in me, but because of His righteousness upon me. That spotless Lamb clothed Himself in the tainted fleece of my transgressions, that I, the stray sheep, might be clothed in the glorious raiment of His

own everlasting and spotless righteousness. **H**old fast the great truth, that you are justified by nothing in you, by nothing by you, but by Christ's righteousness without you ; and then all the prescriptions of Rome will seem the essence of stupidity to you ; you feel you are complete in Christ, and need not the penance of the Church, the prescriptions of the Pope, or the mediation of saint or angel, or any other creature. Hold fast, in the next place, regeneration of heart by the Holy Spirit of God alone. No ecclesiastical officer, however excellent, can change your heart ; no sacraments, however precious, can regenerate your nature. Those that think that baptism, however properly administered, can change the human heart, have a wrong notion of what is amiss in the human heart. If man's fall be merely a transient faintness that has come over him, then a little water, sprinkled by apostolic fingers on his brow, may revive him from his faintness and set him on his feet again. But if the consequence of man's fall be that the creature is dead in trespasses and in sins, that the heart is dead unto God,—then the only power that can quicken my dead heart is that which must open my sealed grave—the Holy Spirit of God ; and He alone. Hold fast your privilege of access to God through Christ alone. You need



no interceding saints or mediating angels ; Christ alone is your Mediator, and in and through Him you have access to God. Your religion, if I dare sum it up in a few words, should be this. No atoning efficacy in any creature, or in any rite, or in anything but Christ alone. No regenerating power in any sacrament, in any sermon, in any priest ; but in the Holy Spirit alone. No conclusive directory of what you are to believe in any Council, in any Pope, in any Church ; but in God's inspired word alone. The Bible without a clasp ; the cross without a screen ; the way to heaven without an obstruction ; the sinner in the dust, and Christ the only Saviour all and in all upon the throne ; this, and nothing short of this, is Protestantism. And, in the next place, let me urge you to pray without ceasing. Use the means of grace, but look to the Spirit of God to bless the use of them. Do not pray, as some people sadly do, as if it were a penance. The poor Roman Catholic repeats Pater Nosters as a penance ; that is, as a punishment. And some Christians I have seen seem to borrow a leaf from Rome. I have seen parents in Scotland prescribe to their children, " You have acted badly ; go home and learn a Psalm." And I have heard parents in England say, " You have conducted yourself very naughtily ; you must

stay at home and learn a Collect." This is teaching your children to be Papists in the nursery itself. You are making them feel prayer to be a penance ; the Being they pray to to be an angry and a revengeful Judge ; whereas prayer is the privilege of Christians, the pleasure of saints. We pray not as criminals deprecating the wrath of a Judge, but as sons, daughters, seeking blessings from a Father. And ages of such prayer have been ages of great progress. Rejoice evermore. No man can afford to be happy but a Christian ; and there is no reason in the universe of God why every Christian should not rejoice always. Rejoice all the day long. Your joys, fed from inexhaustible springs, break forth in more refreshing abundance when the clouds of trouble gather thickest, heaviest, and blackest in your horizon. The bereavements of a Christian are set in the brightest and the purest joy. You know that what betides you is from a Father ; and when he takes from you those that you love, it is only the shepherd taking from the sheep the lamb, that the sheep may follow him who has taken it ; and as your bereaved and your lost ones leave you and enter the gates of glory, a portion of the sunshine that is emitted from the opening gates falls with refreshing brightness upon your spirit, till you are con-

strained to say with her of old, "It is well;" your saddest hours have often been your sweetest: and we shall thank God in heaven most for the days that we deplored as the bitterest, and least for the days that we thought were merry as a marriage bell. "Rejoice; and again I say rejoice." In the beautiful language of the prophet, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls;" then what? The Stoic would say, "Then I must not feel." The Epicurean would say, "Let us eat and drink, because to-morrow we die." The worldling would say, "Let me plunge into dissipation to get rid of the sorrow and bitterness that is in my heart." The miserable atheist would say, "I must despair, and commit suicide." But the Christian could and did say in Habakkuk's days, what the Christian can sing in Christ's days, "Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation."

Hope in God, stretch your hopes and expectations to those brighter and blessed days which may be far nearer than you imagine. Hope grows and nestles in the heart of the Christian not as a mere expectancy, but as an earnest full

of glory. Every step that we take is a stage nearer to the 'end; every event that passes by brings us nearer to glory. And one wonders, if Christians feel the truth of all the bright things, and the glad things, and the happy things, that God has promised to them that love him,—how they can desire to remain behind amid the aches, the ills, the changes, the losses, the crosses, of an eventful world; and are so reluctant and so indisposed to unfold new wings and to take their flight to that better land where the sun never sets, where the sky has no shadow, and where all things are made new. In the beautiful words of an American poet,—

No sickness there,  
No weary wasting of the frame away,  
No dread of summer's bright and fervid ray.

No hidden grief,  
No wild and cheerless vision of despair;  
No vain petition for a swift relief,  
No tearful eye, no broken heart are there.

Care has no home  
Within that realm of ceaseless prayer and song;  
Its tossing billows break and melt in foam  
Far from the mansions of the spirit throng.

The storm's black wing  
Is never spread athwart celestial skies;  
Its wailings blend not with the voice of spring,  
As some too tender flow'ret fades and dies.

No night distils  
Its chilling dews upon the tender frame ;  
No morn is needed there ! the light which fills  
The land of glory, from its Maker came.

No parted friends  
O'er mournful recollections have to weep—  
No bed of death enduring love attends  
To watch the coming of a pulseless sleep.

No withered flower,  
Or blasted bud, celestial gardens know !  
No scorching blast, or fierce descending shower,  
Scatters destruction like a ruthless foe.

No battle word  
Startles the sacred hosts with fear and dread ;  
The song of peace, Creation's morning heard,  
Is sung wherever angels' footsteps tread.

Let us depart,  
If home like this await the weary soul !  
Look up, thou stricken one ! thy wounded heart  
Shall bleed no more at sorrow's stern control.

With faith our guide,  
White-robed and innocent, to tread the way,  
Why fear to plunge in Jordan's rolling tide,  
And find the haven of Eternal Day ?

## IX.

### THEM WHICH ARE ASLEEP.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise first : then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 THESS. IV. 13—18.

IN the very commencement of this passage there are truths so extremely precious, so fitted to comfort and subdue, that they must at all times be seasonable to the people of God ; but they must be especially so to those who weep over them that they loved, and whose countenances are now hidden in the gloom of the sepulchre. The reason why the apostle wrote these words exists still in every section of the visible church, though perhaps there

may not be the same intensity of suffering that there was then, as the same outward circumstances do not now surround the followers of Christ. The Thessalonians, the early Christian converts in Thessalonica, were weeping at this time over the departure of many of those whom death in his ordinary rounds and visits had taken into his bosom and carried away from the crypt of this mortal life into the sunny and blessed temple that is above it. But especially were they weeping over those whom martyrdom had unexpectedly numbered with the dead on earth, though with the heirs of glory in heaven. The ranks of the Church grew thinner, the forces of the heathen grew stronger; and one after another of those they loved and with whom they took sweet counsel together was stricken down. And as they gazed upon the dead below the soil, who outnumbered in their case the living that were above, they wept, and wept so much, that their hopes of the future grew dark, and their sorrow almost quenched their faith in a future by so bitter experience of a sorrowful present. To these Christians, thus weeping over their early dead, Paul addresses these blessed words, which have shed so much sunshine on many a sorrowful home, and breathed so deep consolation into many a broken heart; and enabled the weeper in his sorrow to taste a greater joy than

he ever felt amid the prosperity of the world ; and thus to recognise the blessedness of that religion which teaches the dying how to die, and gives the living they have left behind a consolation full of glory. When Paul speaks to these mourners and weepers, he approaches them with a tenderness as exquisite as it is appropriate. He addresses them as brethren, sharing in the same tribulation, liable to the same sorrow, mourning over his dead as well as they ; and he says to them tenderly, " I would not have you to be ignorant, or to sorrow as them that have no hope." He would not arrest their tears ; he would only endeavour to dilute them. There are seasons in the experience of the human heart when sorrow needs in another an echo, and not repression. Do not say to one weeping over the grave that contains the dust that was once so dear, " Why weep ? Do not weep ; do not be sorrowful." This is to mock his sorrow ; it is to say to him, " Be a stoic ; be granite, be iron ; cease to be human." On the contrary, where you see such sorrow, admit it is demanded ; this is right, as it is natural and sinless. If you acquiesce in the poignant expressions of regret, and reflect the tears of the weeper, you may dilute what you cannot staunch ; you may mitigate what you cannot remove ; you may prove a comforter of



weeping nature, not a crusher of the sensibilities and instincts of the human heart. You do not truly sympathize when you endeavour harshly to check his grief. To go with the tramp and tread of a soldier in the field, or of a sailor on the deck, into the chamber of the sorrowful, the stricken in heart, and speak roughly and rebuke the grief, is not the mode adopted by an apostle. And to go and offer comfort, as a nurse offers a bitter medicine to a sick sufferer which she has never tasted herself, can be no alleviation ; it is neither the comfort of nature nor the consolation of the gospel. If you wish to comfort truly you must weep with them that do weep when you are in the house of mourning ; not hypocritically, for that is horrible ; and not by pretence ; but because even a heathen could say,

*Homo sum ; nil humanum a me alienum puto.*

“ I am a man ; and everything that is human I sympathize with.” You are men, and wherever there is grief you must grieve ; wherever there is joy you should rejoice. It is the beautiful law of that religion of ours which contains the intensest common-sense as well as reflects the brightest and the most blessed hopes, “ Weep, but weep as though you wept not ; rejoice, but rejoice as though you rejoiced not. Weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice ; and

use the world as not abusing it : for the fashion of it speedily passeth away." So here Paul, with that exquisite tact which was characteristic of the man, with that true reflection of the spirit of his Blessed Master, does not forbid the Thessalonians to weep ; he only says, do not weep as they weep that have no hope. He does not forbid tears ; only they should be the tears of grieving hearts, softened and reflecting the radiance of blessed hopes that the world has not. He asserts that the reason of their excessive grief was their ignorance ; but he does not say rudely to them, " You are ignoramuses ;" or, " You do not know anything ;" but with all the tact of high-toned courtesy, with all the sensibility of true love, he says, " I would not wish you, brethren, to weep." You may teach a man without calling him an ignoramus ; you may convey instruction by assuming without asserting that nobody knows better than yourselves. And therefore the apostle approaches the weeper with that Christian delicacy so characteristic of him, and says, " I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren ; or that you should sorrow as them that have no hope." The first basis of true comfort is truth. Poor human nature would always grasp at the fair fruit without the trouble of climbing the tree that bears

it; too often it seeks the comfort, but it does not like to have first the conviction out of which that comfort must necessarily spring. But all comfort which is based upon a falsehood is not enduring. The peace of God springs from truth; the wisdom from above is first pure, that is, true; then it is peaceable. The Holy Spirit is first of all the Teacher, He is second the Comforter; He is first of all the Spirit of truth, and next He is the Comforter. So the duty of a teacher and a preacher still is to enlighten the minds of his people, that thus he may comfort their hearts; for the peace, the hopes, and consolation, which have not their roots in clear, intellectual apprehension of the truth, will not be able to stand the biting frost or the burning sunshine; but, like fragile plants, not sufficiently rooted in the earth, they will wither, and fade, and die. Hence Paul proceeds to put their comfort on the true basis, that it may be as lasting as it is deep and real. The apostle assumes in these words,—“I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep in Jesus,”—that death must interpose in all circles, associations, and families upon earth. Some seem frightened when they hear that this dispensation must one day come to a close; but every man is in himself a dispensation which

must end. Every thirty years the vast population of this great city is numbered with the dead; and in the course of so many years more every face that is now lifted up in the sunshine will be concealed by the shadow of the grave. This is as certain as that the heart now beats. We hear it so often that it ceases to be impressive. We too often think that it is only in fields of battle, or in times of plague, and pestilence, and famine, that men die. People die in palaces as fast as in hovels; they descend into the grave from the loftiest height to which the wing of ambition can soar, as well as across the threshold of the lowliest home in which poverty has steeped the inhabitant. No palatial grandeur, no armed battalions, no intrenchments, bulwarks, and battlements, can keep out the last enemy. Lord Raglan, the magnanimous and accomplished leader of our army in the Crimea, and the humblest soldier in the ranks, fall side by side amid the trenches around Sebastopol. Death is intrenched in sin; and till sin be expunged from this world, death will be found walking in his footprints, as the shadow follows the sunshine, as the echo answers the sound, inseparable till Christ come. "I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep." There is not a fireside probably

that has not memories fleeting around it that once were personal presences ; nor a fold in the wide world in which there is not some dead lamb. There are few memories in which there are not lingering shadows, dear and cherished reminiscences, that you will not part with. But if they that have left these memorials behind them sleep in Jesus, the dim reminiscences will one day be superseded by the grand realities ; and you will cease to remember, because you begin again to see and love, them that sleep in Jesus.

The outward pangs of dissolution are the same apparently in the unconverted and the converted, in the Christian and in the sceptic ; for the outward eye sees no difference ; nerves are as sensitive in the best as they are in the worst ; and there is as great pain probably in dying in one case as in another : but what we say in the case of a Christian is, not that the physical agonies of death, if such there be, are in his case exceptional ; but that he has in his mind, in his heart, bright hopes, overmastering thoughts, that enable him, not to deny that death has a sting, but, what is better, to exclaim in overwhelming triumph, " Where is thy sting ? " — not to deny that the grave has a victory, but, what is far better, to triumph over the forebod-

ing of it, and to say, "O grave, where is thy victory?" We dare not say that the Christian suffers less in disease than the worldling,—often more; but we do maintain that they that are about to fall asleep in Jesus have inward life that completely neutralizes the sorrows of outward experience; and that in the case of the Christian, often where his hopes are highest, where his new life is intensest, death is not dying; it is only a peaceful and gentle transition. Martyrdom itself, when the tent is all broken up rudely and folded in the grave, there to remain till the light of the resurrection-morn,—the most terrible death of all,—is yet called by the apostle a sleep. He speaks of the Thessalonian Christians who had been martyred; and yet he says of these Thessalonian Christians, they sleep in Jesus. Death is not an eternal sleep! Common-sense shows the absurdity of the metaphor; there is no such thing in reality as an eternal sleep. What is sleep? It is the rest of the night, in order that, invigorated and refreshed, you may enter on the enjoyments and employments of the day. And if death be, as the apostle calls it, a sleep, then it is the refreshment of the material economy preparatory to its emergence and entrance upon a glorious and a blessed reward. An eternal sleep is a wrong metaphor as well as a grievous error; what is

worse, it is a wretched theology. Death is not annihilation. If we take sleep as the figure of death, we might almost show how and what a Christian is in death. For what is our condition in sleep? The body lies almost as still in sleep as in death; the only difference that the outward eye can trace, is the heaving, the respiration, and expiration of the lungs. The body itself is deaf, blind, insensible to ordinary pain; it lies still. The poet beautifully conceives, that when Adam first fell asleep he thought it was death coming on him; it was so like it. I feel when awake as if I had a grasp of life, and could hold it fast. But when I sleep I feel as if I had let go life; and if the Great Sentinel of Israel watch not the beating of the heart, it must stand still, for we cannot help it. But if death be sleep, then, as in ordinary sleep, while the body is still, the mind is awake, ringing with fresh and beautiful recollections, that make you occasionally fancy you have witnessed scenes you never could have visited. Have you not one day gone to a beautiful scene, a bright landscape, a grand mountain-chain, and said to yourself, "Surely I have been here before"?—and yet you never were there before. It may be, that when the body sleeps the mind is traversing scenes that are hundreds of miles away, or holding deep communion with some

that have gone ; for to worship spirits that are in heaven is one thing ; to hold communion with them by ways that we do not know is quite another. But while the body rests in perfect sleep, the mind may be ascending to the stars, descending to the depths, traversing the broad, deep sea, holding communion with distant scenes, calling up departed recollections ; and, like the old man spoken of by the poet, who went to cut sharper the impressions on the tomb-stones that the feet of traffic had trodden out, the mind while you sleep may be busy turning over the pages of memory, and freshening its past recollections, drawing from them comfort, encouragement, and strength. If this be sleep, what is death which is likened to it ? The body is laid down not in its bed but in the grave, but the soul keeps its vigils notwithstanding in the skies. As in sleep the body is still and yet the mind is active, so in death the body is only stiller while the mind, disentangled, is more intensely active ; and these two, the one laid in the tomb, the other basking in the sunshine, until the Great Watchman of Israel, who slumbereth not nor sleepeth, speak ; and the dead dust shall start to its feet, and they that were committed, amid the tears of relatives, dust to dust and ashes to ashes, shall come forth, no more in the clinging robes of corruption, but



in the garments of the resurrection-morn, clad in white robes, bright like the sun and fair like the moon. I wonder how any one but a Christian can muster energy to commit his dead to the churchyard; and I wonder how any Christian who commits his dead to the grave can have anything but bright and blessed hopes, not only of a happy reunion, but of recognition and fellowship for ever and ever.

Whilst the apostle speaks of those that have fallen asleep in Jesus, and of their happiness as disembodied spirits, and their hopes of the resurrection, his great object is to repress their grief. "I would not have you to sorrow as they that have no hope." He implies that they that have no hope may sorrow, and must sorrow, till their sorrow develops itself into despair. But, on the other hand, Christians, who have hope and who are not ignorant, need not thus feel sorrow. Why this difference? The pagan, the sceptic, the heathen, and the unbeliever, have no hopes worthy of the name of the immortality of the soul; still less do they cherish any living hope of the resurrection of the body. It is singular that those of the heathen that stood upon the loftiest pinnacle of human reason, and saw furthest into the future, till Socrates almost shone in the light of Gethsemane, and Calvary, and Tabor,—who

believed in the immortality of the soul,—never dared to dream of the possibility of the resurrection of the body. On the contrary, Celsus, a great opponent of Christianity, says, “The doctrine of the resurrection of the body is an abominable doctrine, irrational, and not fit by any to be believed.” It is the peculiar revelation of the gospel: and it is very singular that the hope constantly set before the Christian in the Bible next to the personal advent of his Lord, is not the immortality of the soul, though that is held out, but the hope of the resurrection of the body. The body is part of me; it is not merely my companion that travels with me, but part and parcel of me; and every atom of its dust is just as truly redeemed by precious blood as every faculty of the mind, every affection of the soul. Nay, it is as certain that this very body, not another, but this very body, disinfected, transformed, purified, ennobled, shall rise from the dead, as that the soul shall leap from it and enter into the presence of the Lamb. It is no dream, it is no rough inference, it is no mere guess; it is the blessed hope that made martyrs pour forth their blood like festal wine, and sufferers go down joyfully to the grave, and the ancient Church hope almost against hope in the days of its sorest and its most poignant sufferings.

When the apostle has thus appealed to them he gives them the great ground on which they may entertain this hope. He says, "I would not have you ignorant, as they that have no hope; for," he says, "if we believe"—not doubting, but assuming as his premises their faith in Christ;—"for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,"—which we do believe, and not only believe, but are sure of;—"so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The two great pillars of our Christian faith, the two great springs of our brightest hopes, are these two grand facts,—that Christ died, and that He rose again; and we have as much evidence that He rose as we have that He died; and we have such evidence for both that the man that disbelieves them must be actuated by something else than the conclusions of a sober and unbiassed judgment. The first truth we believe is that Jesus died. He died in our stead, He rose our representative. There is one precious truth which sometimes we do not dwell upon in the pulpit as we should; that is, the union of all believers with Christ Jesus; yet in every part of the Bible we are told that the union of every Christian with Christ is as real, as close, as intimate, as that of a limb to the body, of a branch to the vine, of the dearest, and nearest, and deep-

est relation. If we be united to Christ when He died,—blessed truth! we are held as having died; and as He rose, His resurrection is counted as the pledge and earnest of our resurrection. Our sins were on Him, and He died; His resurrection shall be for us, and we shall rise. But because Christ died there is now no curse in the hand of death; and when He strikes there is no curse accompanying the blow. Christ took away the sting of death; there is no wrath even if there be pestilence in the air; there is no punishment in the sufferings of the dying chamber, however severe. That Atonement made upon the cross 1800 years ago has taken away from a believer that which is the sting of death. The bee deprived of its sting, which is its only weapon, though it lives on, cannot hurt: death is deprived of his sting; for sin, which constitutes that sting, has been completely put away. But while He died He also rose again. He died a vicarious death, He rose a representative person. You must never look at Christ as acting, living, dying, personally or individually; that would be a very great mistake. All that Christ did, all He suffered, was as our representative, as our substitute; and therefore whatever He did, and whatever He endured, is intimately associated with our present deliverance and eternal happi-

ness. When Christ died and was laid in the grave, the grave felt it had a victim, it found it had its vanquisher. When He descended into the grave, under the weight and load and burden of our sins, the world thought there was an end of Him and us for ever. But He went into the grave to break open the portals thereof, and through that grave in His transit to the skies to open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. And therefore when a Christian dies, the winding-sheet, the black earth, the solitary sepulchre, are altogether transfigured, because Christ wore the one and was laid in the other. The grave is now no foreign land ; it is a vestibule of heaven which Christ has consecrated and made fragrant by His holy and His personal presence ; and they that are there are not in a place of annihilation, but in what is called so beautifully—by a word still retained—a cemetery. What is a cemetery ? A place where people sleep ; a sleeping-place ; that is the character of the grave ; they are asleep in Jesus. Now then, if we believe these two facts, says the apostle, if we rest upon these two grand facts, we are not ignorant, we need not sorrow as they that have no hope. For, as he tells us in the next place, “Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.” What a holy and a blessed thought is this, that the souls of Chris-

tians who have now entered into rest, and, in the exquisite language of the Shorter Catechism, are made perfect in holiness, will come to this very earth and appear in this very world again! Those that sleep in Jesus will God—that is, Christ the Saviour, for it is of Him only Paul is speaking—bring with Him. It is not true that the bodies of the dead will be transformed by the last voice of Christ, and lifted like glorified shrines to the place where the soul is; the Scripture statement is that the soul shall come down from heaven to the very earth on which it lived, and there put on the resurrection body. There seems something delightful in this, that the scene of its separation from the body shall be the very scene of its reunion to the body: and on the very grave where death seemed to have raised his trophies, shall the resurrection-morn shed its sunshine and awaken its triumphant and its glorious songs.

These words of the apostle, “will God bring with Him,” are not at all peculiar to him; for in Zechariah we are told, “The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee;” or, as the apostle calls it here, “Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.” So again in the Epistle of Jude, “The Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints.” How magnificent that

chariot-cloud that will one day come in the bright sunshine, carrying in it the Lord of glory just as we saw Him leave the earth; and with Him thousands, tens and hundreds of thousands, of them that fell asleep in Jesus. There is something interesting in this, that your departed friends are not severed from you for ever, but as Christ returns so they will return. That lost child, that dead relative whom we call dead, will actually come again to this very earth; and on the place and at the place where it put off its mortal garments, it will put on its resurrection-robes; for them that sleep in Jesus He will bring with Him.

The apostle adds the inference he wishes them to draw, "Wherefore comfort one another." Do not regard it as an endless separation. He also adds what is also fitted to comfort, "We which are alive and remain shall not prevent them which are asleep." This teaches us that to the end of this dispensation there will be a church upon earth. "We that are alive at the coming of the Lord shall not prevent"—that is, go before—"them that are asleep." To the last moment there will be a company of Christians living to worship Christ, to profess His gospel, and to illustrate in their lives its holy and its magnificent fruits and results. To this faithful flock,

looking for the Lord Jesus, we are told He will come. "We which are alive at His coming." Christ is present wheresoever two or three Christians meet in His name now ; but this presence is a virtual, a spiritual, an unseen, though not an unfelt, presence. But we are told here that Christ will come again the second time personally, without sin unto salvation. And if you ask how Christ will come, He tells us Himself. "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go." His first advent was to suffer, His second will be to reign ; His first was as the man of sorrows ; the second will be as the mighty God. When He came first it was as the soft and dawning light, so soft and gentle that the infant's eye could not be injured by its touch ; but when He comes the second time it will be with the speed and with the splendour of the lightning flash, that illuminates the concave from the east even onward to the west ; for, "as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be ; and they shall see the Son of man com-



ing in the clouds of heaven with power and with great glory."

Then this world is not cast off; it is not to be extinguished; it is not to be handed over to Satan. Christ that died on it will again come to it. And "we that are alive at His coming shall not prevent them that are asleep." The word *prevent* is used in the old Saxon sense of *go before*. These Christians of Thessalonica thought that they who were living at Christ's advent would have a special privilege; whereas the apostle says it will be all the reverse; for if there be a difference at that day, the dead in Christ—that is, believers that have died in Christ—shall have the precedence; for the first thing that will take place will be the awakening of the sleeping dead, and their glorification in body; and the next thing—for the Greek word is *επειτα*, which we translate *then*, but which ought to be *afterwards*—will be the change of those that are the living saints. The dead bore the heat and burden of the day, and they shall have the precedence. And what a solemn thought! the nearness of which we know little of, but the certainty of which we have absolute assurance of;—that some still and silent hour, when all the world shall be busy as it now is, two grinding at the mill, two standing toge-

ther upon the exchange; trade, commerce, mills, ships going on as before; soldiers in the field, sailors on the ocean; unexpected by the mass of mankind, thirsted for, longed for by the Christian few, a dread crash shall reverberate from heaven to earth, and return its multiplied echoes from earth to heaven; and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, every grave shall open; stony pyramids, monuments of bronze, marble mausolea, shall rend before an irresistible force that they never felt before; and the dust that sleeps in the silent caves of the sea, that great tomb of nations; and the dead dust that has many folds of the sands of the desert for its winding-sheet; and the dust that is in stony pyramids, and that which has been scattered by every wind of heaven, but never annihilated because incapable of annihilation, shall come atom to atom, and the dead shall rise, and we the living shall be changed. What a thought is here, that there are some, it may be, now living who shall never die; or if they shall, not their children, or their children's children; but one day will come,—it is no dream, it is no fancy,—when there shall be a generation of Christians who shall not know what it is to die; but the instant that the sleeping dead come forth, that instant the living body shall be transfigured, transformed by the touch and breath of Him who

is the Resurrection and the Life ; and this very mortal without dying shall put on immortality, this very corruptible without going into the grave shall put on incorruption, and we shall be changed.

In this passage there is no allusion whatever to the resurrection of the lost. I want particularly to notice this. You have often heard me allude to the fact of there being two resurrections ; and if I did not find it in the Bible I should not assert it. Christ comes I believe before, not after, the millennium ; for sunshine comes from a risen sun, not sunshine ushers in a risen sun ; the millennium is the sunshine, Christ is the Sun. Those that hold there will be a thousand years at the end of which Christ will come, after they see the thousand years begun, and two hundred of these years have elapsed, may say, " In 800 years more Christ will come ; " and when 999 years are passed, then in one year, they can say, Christ will come ; and thus they are the people that fix the day and the hour, not we. We do believe that Christ will come first ; and that the burst of millennial sunshine follows His presence. We know not when the Son of man cometh ; but when He does come, there will be, as we have seen, first the resurrection of Christians. But it is asked, when are the rest of the dead raised ; because the ♦ guilty will be raised as well as the sanctified dead ?

I answer, we are told in that book which we have often read, Revelation xx. 4: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." It is added in the 5th verse, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." If you should say that this raising of Christ's people and their reigning with Him a thousand years is figurative, then you must allow me to add, "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" must be figurative also. If the first be not a literal resurrection, the second is not a literal resurrection; if one be literal, both must be literal. But so explicit is John, that he adds at the end of the 5th verse, "This is the first resurrection." It is in the Greek most expressive; "This is that very resurrection, that special and distinct resurrection." In the passage upon which I have been commenting there is not a word about the lost. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so them that sleep

in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ "—dead believers in Christ—"shall rise first, then," secondly, "we which are alive"—we Christians, the last generation that is alive—"shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air;" but not a word is here about the resurrection of the unconverted. And if you read your Bible with care, and read it as you might easily do in these passages in the original, you will find in every reference to the resurrection that there is a broad, unmistakeable distinction between the two. Take Luke xiv. 14, "At the resurrection of the righteous;" as if to intimate a distinct and peculiar one. Then in Luke xx. 35 we read, what I translate literally, "The resurrection, that resurrection selected from among the dead;" for such is the meaning of it, it is very emphatic—"that resurrection; that one which is from among the dead." Again, in John v. 29, "the resurrection of life" is a distinct and

separate one. Again, in Philippians iii. 11, Paul expresses a wish ; " If I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Now, as most people read this, it seems absurd ; because, if bad and good are to be raised, the apostle Paul of course knew that he would be raised like the rest of mankind. Then what could be his meaning in wishing to attain the resurrection of the dead ? When you leave our translation with all its excellence, and turn to the original Greek, you find that the words are, literally rendered, " If I may attain to that resurrection from among the dead." When we turn to the apostle's description in 1 Corinthians xv., at the 23rd verse, " Every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits ; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father." We explain all these by Revelation xx. 5, " This is the first resurrection."

Let us ask ourselves, have we received, first, life from spiritual death, that ours may be life from material and physical death ? Have we felt the power of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life ? Are we living in Christ ? It is they that live in Christ that fall asleep in Christ. Are we in Christ now ? Then for us there is

nothing but peace in the present, and a brilliant hope for the future ; and a Christian may go down into the grave with the same joy with which he lies down on his bed ; knowing it is but the sleep, the last sleep, that will be everlasting refreshment.

## X.

### THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION.

“ But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”—1 THESS. IV. 13—18.

THESE Thessalonian Christians were mourning not merely the death by nature, as we call it, but by martyrdom, of many of those that were near and dear to them as fellow-heirs of the kingdom of God. Their bereavement was so sore, their sense of it so bitter, that they began to sorrow over the loss of their dear departed dead almost as the heathen sorrow, without mitigating that sorrow with the least bright



and radiant hope. The apostle writes to them with all the skill of one that knew human nature thoroughly, with all the affection of one that understood the appliances of the gospel truly,—“My dear brethren, I would not wish you not to sorrow; but I do wish you not to sorrow as they do that have no hope.” If the apostle had forbidden their sorrow, it would have been forbidding humanity itself. It is as natural to weep as it is to eat, to drink, or to rejoice; and the Christian that does not weep,—except it be that sorrow which cannot find tears, the bitterest and most poignant of all,—does not indicate a nobler humanity tuned to finer issues, but a harder, inferior, and grosser one. I need no more consecration of tears than one text, “Jesus wept;” that is enough for me; and he that forbids the tears of the weeper forbids the imitation, but the instinctive imitation, of a Divine and a perfect precedent. Man says to the mourner, “Do not weep,” than which nothing can be more stupid, nothing more unnatural. Jesus says to the mourner, “Weep; but not as they that have no hope.” In other words, the Christian would dilute, not repress, the tears of them that sorrow over the loss and departure of the beloved dead. Then says the apostle, “While I would not have you to sorrow as those that have no hope,

I would have you to remember that Jesus died." God in my nature died for me, that my death might be not penal, but transition to everlasting life. And not only Jesus died, but, still brighter hope if possible, Jesus rose again from the dead; "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again." If He had not risen, what would have been the fact? It would then have been evident that the load of our sins so crushed Him that he sunk a helpless victim beneath the pressure; but the fact that He rose from the dead is evidence that he expiated all our sins, exhausted all our wrath, and opened by his out-stretched hand—the very hand that we crucified—the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Jesus rose again. "Even so them that sleep in Jesus." Beautiful thought! Christians sleep in Jesus. That poor, frail, disorganized dust that lies a hundred fathoms down in the deep, deep sea, or beneath the gory sod at Inkermann, and Alma, and Sebastopol;—that dead, and mangled, and mutilated frame, if it be the tent that a believer has struck as he emerged to glory and immortality, is as thoroughly under the inspection, united to the person, watched over by the presence, of my Lord and my Saviour, as if He had nothing else in the universe to do than to take care of that dead dust, and warm it again into everlasting life. Blessed thought! we

sleep in Jesus. French infidels actually had the impudence to write, "Death is an eternal sleep;" they thus not only violated the Bible, they not only violated common sense, but they positively mutilated a proper and expressive figure of speech; for the very nature of sleep implies it is not eternal; nobody sleeps for ever. What is sleep? The rest of the exhausted body by night in order to endure the duties, the enjoyments, and the employments of the morrow. And the very fact, therefore, that death is a sleep implies that the body sleeps; that is, has ceased to act in the grave; but the soul is not dead. We ourselves are conscious of it;—while the body is lying as helpless as if it were in the grave, the mind, the soul, unconfined in its little space, in this frail case, is soaring amid the stars, is excavating the earth, is tracing the laws of chemistry, is revisiting the streams by which we wandered in boyhood, and the hills that we trod in earlier years, in short, sweeping the length and breadth of space whilst the body is lying still upon the bed. Does not this suggest that, while this body is dissolving in the grave, the soul that can act separate from it in sleep may act separate from it in death; and whilst the body rests and sleeps equally in Christ, the soul is with Christ;—an idea unspeakable and full of glory? The pro-

foundest philosophy, the deepest common sense, the truest sense, are in God's holy word. "They that sleep in Christ." Who are they? They that lived in Christ, and therefore sleep in Him. What does he say of them? "Those that sleep in Christ will God bring with Him." There is something delightful in this. We always fancy when our dead leave us that they are never to come to us again. But at the last day a magnificent cloud, fringed with the glory of an unsetting sun, will come careering on the wings of the air; and in that cloud—as we are told expressly, "In like manner as ye have seen Him go in a cloud, so shall He come"—will Christ be, with all that have fallen asleep in Him; and the soul of your father, or your mother, or your sister, or your brother, that fell asleep in Christ, will revisit this very earth; and on that very spot on which they laid aside this mortal garment they will resume a garment radiant with all the splendours of glory; on that very grave in which they deposited the frail tenement of clay they will resume it; this corruptible having put on incorruptibility, this mortal immortality; and then, and not till then, will be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." Those that sleep in Christ, then, will Christ bring with Him. Then, says the

apostle, why should you sorrow? Why should you not comfort each other? You are not separated for ever; your relatives have gone across the ocean; they will return; and you will go home, and both be at home together. He adds, "For we that are alive, and remain to the coming of the Lord." Thus some Christians will be upon earth when Christ comes; nay, we are told in the Gospels that they will be buying and selling when Christ comes. And there is no sin in that; there is no more sin in your standing behind a counter in a shop than there is merit in standing in a pulpit and preaching the gospel. On the contrary, Christianity is not a speculation, but a life. You learn on the Sunday what is true, you practise on the Monday what you have learned in the shape of justice, mercy, and truth; and you are on the week-day practising that which on the Sunday I preach and you hear. And if Christ come and find you grinding at the mill, serving at the counter, prescribing on the sick bed, pleading at the bar, judging on the bench, He will find you, not where you ought not to be, but just where you ought to be, honouring and serving Him in that sphere in which by His providence He has placed you. It is a great and disastrous error which some entertain, that they cannot be Christians unless they are in a church. In fact

it is a Popish notion that there can only be holy work in holy places. When our blessed Lord allied himself to a portion of my dust, He consecrated the battle-field, the quarter-deck, the farm, the court of justice, the floor of the shop, till the lowliest floor in the lowliest home is holy as tessellated tiles or consecrated pavements under the roof of the grandest cathedral of Europe. The whole earth is holy; and what is wanted is holy men to live on it and tread it; and everywhere a Christian is in his right place.

Then those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. "For," he says, "we that are alive shall not prevent," that is, precede, "the dead in Christ;" they, and not the living in Christ, "shall rise first." And then, he adds, after every grave has given up its charge; after every cemetery, or sleeping-place, has rendered its slumbering contents, we Christians who happen to be alive at that day shall have this privilege, which indeed is a great one,—not the privilege of precedence of the dead, but the privilege that we shall never die. "We shall be caught up together with them, to meet the Lord in the cloud, in the air." Now some say, Does not this imply that Christ is not to come down to our world; that this earth is not to be our home? I answer, the words are not, caught up to heaven; for Christ, it is said,

comes from heaven; "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven;" he does not say that we shall be caught up *to heaven*; but we shall be caught up *in the air*, in the atmosphere, the common atmosphere. You ask, Why? On this account; when Christ comes there will take place the resurrection of the dead saints, the glorification of the living saints, but there will also be another event, stated in 2 Thess. i. 7: "To you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven," that is, when He shall descend from heaven, "with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Or, as Peter expresses it in 2 Peter iii. 12, "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God," that is, the day when God shall come, when Christ shall descend from heaven;—"wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for," not another heaven, but "a new heaven;" not another earth, but "a new earth;" just as I have by the Holy Spirit not another heart, but a new heart; not another nature, but a new nature. Whilst this earth shall dissolve and burn with fervent heat, the intimation in this passage to the Thessalonians that

we are considering is, that all believers, made up of the dead saints raised and the living saints transformed, shall be caught up into the air beyond the reach of the flame, so that it shall not singe a hair of their heads or injure the skirts of their garments. And whilst that cloud with Christ and all His ransomed and redeemed church is in the air, this earth moving below shall undergo its last baptism by fire, and through that baptism shall be made a meet and holy and blessed dwelling-place for the children of God for all generations. And hence in Revelation xxi. you have the picture of what takes place after the earth is consumed, where he says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth." Peter says we are looking for a new heaven and a new earth; when the old earth and the old heaven shall be consumed with fire; and that during the violence of that convulsion Paul assures us we shall be unscathed in our retreat in the air with our Lord. John says in Rev. xxi., "I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." And then what does he add? After the old earth is consumed, and a new earth, not another earth, takes its place, he says, "I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem,"—that is, the company of the people of God, caught up to meet Christ in the air,—



“coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” Thus we have the beautiful exposition of the apostle’s idea that we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. And then he adds, “So shall we be”—thus shall we be—“for ever with the Lord.” The essence of heaven is, “for ever with the Lord.”

Having touched upon all these doctrinal points, let us specially consider the last part of this passage, “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” Now let us recollect this, that the resurrection from among the dead—and I showed you that the resurrection spoken of here is not the resurrection that succeeds the millennium, that is, of the wicked ; but the resurrection that precedes the millennium, that is, the first resurrection ;—“that resurrection from among the dead,”—as the Greek teaches in every passage where it is referred to,—is the great truth that, next to the Atonement, is peculiar to Christianity. When Paul preached it at Athens some mocked, and others said, “Oh, we will hear thee again of this matter ;” as much as to say, “Oh, this is too strong, we cannot stand this ; the thing is absurd, it is impossible.” But how different is the language of the apostles in almost every page of the New Testament ! “We look for our Sa-

viour Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto His glorious body." And again, "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead in Christ shall rise." My body—not my companion, but half of myself—is as component a part of me as the soul. A man is not complete as a soul, he is not complete as a body; he is complete and perfect in glory, when soul and body are reknit, and reunited together. I do not mean to say, as some preachers and commentators have tried to show, that nature proves a resurrection. It does no such thing; but certainly nature, or, if the less objectionable word be preferred, creation, furnishes analogies that, if they do not prove, illustrate the resurrection. The chrysalis, that ugly and repulsive looking thing, fades, decays; but out of it there leaps a golden-winged butterfly, so merry in the sunbeam and so beautiful. If you were to see the chrysalis, and if you were told that out of that filthy, repulsive thing there would emerge that beautiful flower that floats upon the air, a thing of life, you would say, if you had no experience, "It is absurd; it is impossible." This does not prove the resurrection, but it illustrates it. In the same manner, when a seed decays, and that seed evolves a bright flower, you have an analogous change. What connexion in the

world is there between a fragrant, beautiful moss-rose in June, and the coarse, rugged stem in the earth in February? We see none; yet all the blossoms and the fragrance of that fair and fragrant rose are compressed in that ugly and repulsive root. If you had never seen the rose, but only the root, you must be a prophet in order to predict a rose expanding from that root. And again, decay takes place in autumn; and the decay of autumn becomes the manure of future growths, and blossoms, and fruits. I admit there is mystery in the resurrection; but there is no impossibility. I do not see one bit more difficulty in bringing a resurrection body out of a dead and corrupt body in the grave, than in bringing the bright, fragrant blossom of a rose out of a dry, ugly, and repulsive root. I know some will ask, as they argued with the apostle, "Do you mean to say that the same body that we now wear is the very body that will appear at the resurrection?" I do mean to say so; because, if it were another body, what would be the use of talking of a resurrection? A *resurgo*, a *resurrectio*, is the raising again of the thing that you have laid down; and if it be another body it would be a creation then made for the soul, not a resurrection then taking place of the body. There is no difficulty in the world,

if you assume that the thing is predicted by God to be, and that Omnipotence is engaged to accomplish it. "But do we not know that the beasts of the earth may devour one part of the body, the fishes of the deep another part; shot and shell will rend to atoms another part; the worms will feed sweetly upon the remainder? Do you mean to say, that that thing can ever rise again?" I do mean to say it, because God has said it first. Do you not know that in modern times such is our progress in chemistry, that if one swallow a quantity of mineral poison or arsenic, a chemist will take a portion of the body, he will set his chemical knowledge into action; and he will subtract out of that fragment of your dead frame every particle of the arsenic that has been incorporated into it and become part and parcel of yourself? If the chemist can do so in things so difficult as this, will you deny to the Great Creator and Chemist of the universe a power adequate to collect every atom of your dust, and to build it up in more than its pristine glory, magnificence, and greatness? That this body is to be material I think is equally plain. We have all of us what I must call a crotchet; that is, a notion that there is something so polluted, so impure, so sinful in matter, that we cannot conceive it ever reëxist-

ing in glory. This is absurd. The sin that is in matter was not original in it any more than the sin that is in the spirit. That matter is not necessarily sinful, that there is nothing intrinsically sinful in it, is plain from this—our blessed Lord dwelt in a body like mine; there was no sin in it; it was pure, yet it was matter, it was clay, it was the flesh of Adam; not an immaculate nature taken from an immaculate creature, but an immaculate nature taken from a sinful, polluted, and fallen creature. And in that body made of clay the Redeemer dwelt as Deity in a shrine. There can be nothing incurably sinful in that which Christ thus dwelt in. But is not the resurrection body called a spiritual body? It is; but to call it a spiritual body is not to call it a spirit; all the expression fairly means is, that it is a body with higher attributes, higher prerogatives, higher essential excellence; but still, as the apostle says, it is a body.

This great truth of the resurrection of the body was evidently known to the ancient prophets; for Isaiah says, "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Wake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; the earth shall cast out her dead." And Job says, with prophetic instinct approaching the inspira-

tion of the evangelist, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." He evidently had a hope that many modern Christians refuse to indulge in; "though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh"—my flesh, not a new flesh or another flesh, but in *my* flesh—"shall I see God." So Ezekiel describes the resurrection of the Jewish nation under the metaphor of dry bones becoming clothed with flesh. I admit this is figurative, but every figure has a fact for its basis; and therefore it assumes the truth of the resurrection. And Daniel closes his magnificent prophecy by saying, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Our blessed Lord preached it when He said, "The hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth." Paul, as we have seen, preached it at Athens; Peter begins his Epistle by saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

This, therefore, we are sure of, and do not doubt, that this frail tenement shall be strong again as Omnipotence can make it; that this corruptible tenement shall be yet incorruptible. The caravan sunk in the sands of the desert shall send forth its buried ones; the great deep sea, that grave of nations,—the Euxine and the Baltic,—shall give up their buried crews at the sound of the last trump, at the shout of the archangel. The victims of plague, pestilence, and famine shall come forth; and the very dust that you have built into your home, the very earth that you tread upon, and the very grass of the field, shall one day become each disorganized, dissolved, disintegrated; and every atom of my body that shall be found in grass, in flower, in fruit, in decay, in the tomb, shall come forth at the bidding of Him in whose omniscient eye atoms are as exactly seen as the everlasting hills, and as truly and really controlled.

Having arrived at the fact that the resurrection is real, there are some questions in connexion with it that one may fairly ask;—Will the bonds of family survive the resurrection? Shall the son know the parent; the parent, the child? Shall the sister recognise the brother; the brother, the sister; relative, relative? They will.

I cannot believe that the family, consecrated by our blessed Lord when He sat by the fire-side and taught under the roof-tree of Martha and Mary,—the holy and beautiful association that He hallowed by His presence,—is to be extinguished, quenched, forgotten. I cannot conceive that a son, a daughter, a brother, a sister, can part with their memories at the resurrection, or forget that they were so, or cease to reciprocate the feelings that they once cherished. There is a very beautiful little poem written by Wordsworth, which is meant to show that the instinctive feeling of nature pleads for the survival of the family tie. It is conceived, like all he writes, most simply, but it is rich in the profoundest truth.

“ Sisters and brothers, little maid,  
 How many may you be ?  
 How many ? Seven in all, she said,  
 And wondering looked at me.

And where are they, I pray you tell ?  
 She answered, Seven are we ;  
 And two of us at Conway dwell,  
 And two are gone to sea.

Two of us in the churchyard lie,  
 My sister and my brother ;  
 And in the churchyard cottage I  
 Dwell near them with my mother.



You say that two at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea,  
Yet you are seven ; I pray you tell,  
Sweet maid, how this may be.

Then did the little maid reply,  
Seven boys and girls are we ;  
Two of us in the churchyard lie,  
Beneath the churchyard tree.

You run about, my little maid,  
Your limbs they are alive ;  
If two are in the churchyard laid,  
Then ye are only five.

Their graves are green, they may be seen,  
The little maid replied,  
Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,  
And they are side by side.

My stockings there I often knit,  
My kerchief there I hem,  
And there upon the ground I sit—  
I sit and sing to them.

And often after sunset, Sir,  
When it is light and fair,  
I take my little porringer,  
And eat my supper there.

The first that died was little Jane ;  
In bed she moaning lay,  
Till God released her of her pain,  
And then she went away.

So in the churchyard she was laid ;  
 And all the summer dry  
 Together round her grave we played,—  
 My brother John and I.

And when the ground was white with snow,  
 And I could run and slide,  
 My brother John was forced to go,  
 And he lies by her side.

How many are you then, said I,  
 If they two are in heaven ?  
 The little maiden did reply,  
 Oh, master, we are seven.

But they are dead, those two are dead,  
 Their spirits are in heaven.  
 'Twas throwing words away ; for still  
 The little maid would have her will,  
 And said, Nay, we are seven."

She could not allow that the family tie was snapped by death ; she held that the two whose spirits were in heaven and whose dust was in the village churchyard were still part and parcel of that little family ; and the number, even when thinned by death, she persisted, still was seven. The instincts of a child are truer than the logic of a philosopher ; very often children instinctively feel what great philosophers can barely reason out. That thought, therefore, " We are seven," though death has made a separation, will continue to be true whether the seven are united

or separate. And to suppose that the seven shall meet where there is no more severing, and shall not know that they are the offspring of one mother, that they called one once a father, that they were and felt towards each other as brothers and sisters — is more than I can conceive ; I will not give up the blessed and the beautiful hope that the resurrection will still enable them to say, what in mortality they ventured to say, “ We are still seven.”

We shall know and recognise each other at that glorious and blessed resurrection. The resurrection is not a vague extrication of a common nature from the dust of the earth ; but the resurrection of an individual body in all its individuality, with every feature retained clear and distinct as ever. The grave has no power to overlay any lineaments in the human frame. What pain has wrestled with, what disease has disfigured, what decay has transmuted, shall emerge again—the shrine of a soul, meet residence for a holy and a happy tenant. That expression of unutterable feeling, on the face of the mother that you loved, which like sunshine made the household door open to her approach, shall never, never perish. That smile of benignity and goodness that flitted over the familiar countenance shall endure, more sharply and

clearly defined than ever. Those glad tones that used to ring like sweet music upon your threshold and to reverberate under your roof-tree, as words that were intensely "household words," shall again resound and be heard amid the choirs of the blessed in more beautiful vibrations. All that constitutes you, all that is your identity; all that you know and have felt of feeling, sympathy, expression, look, tone, temperament; purified, ennobled, disinfected from decay, shall survive the grave, and appear at that day when Christ shall come, and the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall come forth. Oh, can I for a moment suppose that in the future in my resurrection-body I am to be like a Popish saint in a niche, cold and clad in solitary magnificence? Can I suppose for one moment that in the future I am to sit down in the courts of our Lord with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and not know who they are? Can I imagine for one moment that there shall be a great family in heaven, in the words of our Lord, "Father, I will that those that Thou hast given me be with me, that where I am there they may be also;" and yet that it shall be the only family in which there shall be no recognition or recollection? Will it be the law in heaven, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and shall I have no neigh-

bour to love? I can love the unseen ; I cannot love the unknown. But what does the apostle say in this very Epistle ? “ What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing ? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming ? ” What does he mean by this ? That his great satisfaction at the resurrection-morn will be that those he was the means of enlightening will there present themselves, giving Christ the glory, but recognising him as the humble instrument of all. Shall there be a great multitude of nations, kindreds, tongues ; shall national features be preserved ; shall different languages be there ; and shall there be no reciprocal communion and affection between those that loved on earth, and took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God as one ? Heaven would lose a portion of its charms if we were there insulations only, without sympathy, without recognition. Nay, it will be one of the parts of our blessed review that we shall reconsider all the desert through which we have passed ; what led us to a Saviour ; what brought us to happiness : we shall review all and reconsider all ; and it will swell the magnificence of our eternal songs that we saw God in the desert, and felt that He was with us and guided us there.

Another question has been asked, about the

place of our future existence. My strong conviction is, it will be this very orb. How will it hold all the people? That will be easily settled if we can ascertain it is declared that it shall be.

- The notion one must exceedingly dislike is the giving up of this beautiful earth of ours to the devil, or annihilating it. Can I suppose that that orb that has been honoured by the death, and deeds, and presence of the Son of God will ever be destroyed? He breathed its air, He drank of its streams, He walked upon its green carpet, He lay in one of its graves, He preached ~~on one~~ of its mountains; He took a part of it into alliance with Himself. Shall such an orb, so consecrated, so signalized, so glorified, become the devil's? Shall it be expunged and annihilated? I never can believe it. But you say, "Oh, it is so wicked; there is so much wrong in it." Quite so; there is more wrong in it than you admit; but the Great Regulator may come forth and put it all right again. There is nothing irrecoverably wrong; on the contrary, it has in it all the elements of good. How beautiful the cloud careering on the wind; how sweet the long, meandering course of the bright river; how glorious the dew-drops of the morning; how fragrant the moss rose of June; how splendid the glories of summer; what music in the

waves; what grandeur in the everlasting hills; what beauty in many a lovely valley! What is wanting? Just one thing. Take sin away, and I could live on it for ever and ever. I am quite satisfied with this earth as my heaven; the part in it I am dissatisfied with is sin; and as soon as sin is expunged, decay, death, disease, withered leaves, storm, tempest, hurricane, convulsion, all being the progeny of sin, pass away with sin; and the consecrating presence of Christ shall make all things new again. In this very earth on which the cloud descends with the saints from the air shall be the dwelling-place of all the people of God.

If I speak to any in these times when there are so many mourners, not only over those that have died in the ordinary course of nature, but those that have died upon the field of conflict;—if you have this hope, that your dead fell asleep in Christ, then instead of complaining you ought to be at peace; at least not sorrowing as those that have no hope. Would you wish the soldier, returned to his home, covered with his laurels, to go back to the battle-field again? Would you desire the sailor who has escaped from conflict and from storm to return to the tempestuous sea, and the terrible scenes of conflict? Would you wish the Christian

who has gone home, who is now with Christ in his spirit and sleeps in Christ in his dead dust, to come back to your miserable abode, to your poor fellowship ; and to eat of your bread, and to drink of your cup, and to be penetrated with your sorrows, and to feel your griefs and your vexations ? You cannot wish it. “ Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord ; they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.” And at that blessed reunion there shall be no separations, there shall be no tears over the dead, there shall be no farewells to the dying, there shall be no grief, there shall be no disease, nor decay. Read the last two chapters of the Apocalypse ; every sentence is music, every promise is living food, every prospect is inlaid with glory. Then why should we grieve over them ? why should we wish them back ? They will come back at the end, but in the bright cloud that brings our Lord to us also, and resume what we are sacredly watching over as their dead dust left behind them ; and so shall we be for ever with the Lord. Then, in words of the same poet,

“ Heart, be still ;  
 In the darkness of thy woe  
 Bow thee silently and low ;  
 Come to thee whate’er God will,  
 Be thou still.



Be thou still :  
Vainly all thy words are spoken ;  
Till the word of God hath broken  
Life's dark mysteries, good or ill,  
Be thou still.

Lord my God,  
By thy grace oh may I be  
All submissive, silently,  
To the chastening of thy rod,  
Lord my God.

Shepherd King,  
From thy fulness grant to me,  
Still yet fearless, faith in thee,  
Till from night the day shall spring,  
Shepherd King."

May God increase in us this blessed hope;  
and give us that resurrection from among the  
dead which is the hope of all believers.

## XI.

### THE LAST DAY.

"In the last day."—JOHN XII. 48.

IT is plain that our Lord here refers to our responsibility. The last day of the last month of each year is the meeting time of the past and the future ; — when the past descends quietly to its grave, and the future leaps forth in resurrection beauty, like a strong man to run a race. Every period into which time is divided has its close. The day merges into the shadows of the evening ; the month runs its course, and resigns its mission to its successor ; the year finishes its cycle, and has its last month and its last day. These months, these closing epochs, are meant to suggest to man the study of that great mystery, this life of ours, that floats between the past and the future, and keeps up affinities with both. In the ancient and Eastern world they commence the year on the 25th of March ; and the reason of their so dating it is obvious. At this time the sun seems to gain strength and power ; and the earth, in the opening spring, to give token that

the influence of the increasing sun begins to be felt by it. In Northern and Western parts, and in recent times, we date the year at January, when the light begins to break a little earlier on the mountain-tops at morn ; and lingers a few minutes later in the distant west ; and if the influence of the sun be not felt by us, the fact that the day begins to lengthen, and the night to shorten, is sufficient reason for our beginning the year as now. Blessed thought ! there is a day to come that has no twilight ; there is a Sun to rise upon the everlasting hills under whose wings there is healing, and who has no western limit, no tropical return ; shining resplendent from a meridian throne from which He never descends ; in whose presence there is fulness of joy, at whose right hand there are pleasures for ever and ever. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth ; but He, like his truth, endureth for ever and for ever. The sun of our life will soon set, the heart will soon throb weary with the beat of life ; but the soul, that is, myself, has no close to its existence ; it leaps from the shattered tabernacle, and only feels free when the latter is in ruins.

Is it the last day of another year come ? If not yet come it soon will. In a very few weeks or months it will be exhausted ; and its waters—that have run so tempestuously in many a chan-

nel, and over buried wrecks, and hearts' hopes buried with them—will lie still and calm over all the memorials of the past; and things that were shall seem as if they never had been. The present year rolls its waters over graves we did not think would have opened so soon, over wrecks that we did not expect would occur so early; over scenes, and sorrows, and trials, and bereavements, and hidden griefs, too big for tears and too solemn for expression, that we neither anticipated nor dreamed of. To some the present is a year of anxious thought, of terrible uncertainty, of painful losses. To others it is a year of sore separations, of wounds that life will not heal, of sorrows that the remedial hand of time will not be able to mitigate. Footfalls that were heard like glad music on domestic thresholds will be heard no more, till the trumpet of the judgment sound; Christmas congratulations that were so sweet will be felt no more in this world; plans that we had laid, and were ready to follow out, are left unfinished; enterprises we cherished as our dearest hopes, and garnered in our hearts as our highest expectations, are stifled in their birth. Buds that gave promise of bright flowers are blasted; flowers that gave prophecy of rich and fragrant fruit are withered; and our earth, our country, our homes, our firesides have been

disenchanted of half their beauty, because some that were near and dear have passed away like shadows from the dial-plate of time, and the place that knew them once shall know them no more for ever. Faces on whom other days opened with all the brightness of manhood begin now to be furrowed with years; tresses that were raven black begin to be thinned and silvered with threatening grey. Every man is every day so much older; God grant that every one of us may be a stage nearer to eternal joy.

We measure time by the heavenly bodies. The Moslem in the East on the lofty minaret watches for the first streak of the rising moon, that he may begin the holy cycle; the sun with us is the great ruler of the day, and the moon of the night. What a condescending love does God show in this single fact—that he makes the orbs of the sky the measurement of man's life; the firmament itself the dial-plate of time; and the stupendous machinery of the heavens the clock-work that tells man how old he is, and how much seems to be wanting before he enters on the everlasting rest. The rising and setting sun metes out the day; and the procession of the year through the genial spring, the fragrant and the glowing summer, and the prolific autumn, is another measurement or meter of the years in

which we live. God would not have us—as he shows us by His firmament above and by the earth below—insensible to the lapse of time, or ignorant how much of our life-time has ebbed away. Time speaks to us every day in the whispers of its hours, in the echoing march of its days, in the solemn and heavy tread of its years; and its every utterance to a thoughtful and reflecting mind is, “Prepare to meet thy God.” But we measure time also in another way; we measure it less often by the machinery of the firmament, by the changes on the earth’s surface, or by the artificial mechanism of man; and oftener by what we may call comparison. We make threescore and ten years the great standard, as it were. When a babe dies in its infancy, like a flower no sooner blown than blasted, we call its life very brief; when a boy dies at twelve years of age we speak of it as an early death. And the reason why we call the one brief, and the other early; and the reason why we call the life of the old man, gathered like a shock of corn in its season, taken at eighty, ninety, or a hundred, very long, is that we make the measuring line the span, the probable span, of our own fleet existence. But the truth is, our life itself, when it is longest, compared with Methuselah’s is but a span; and even Methuselah’s, compared with the

existence of Him who is, from everlasting to everlasting, God, and in whose estimate a thousand years are but as yesterday, is but as a beat of the pulse, an hour of the clock, a day that speedily passes away. We measure life very often by our own feelings. It is singular how much man has the power of making the world either shadow or sunshine, joy or sorrow; and how little, after all, outer things can operate upon the inner heart and the inner life. Have you not noticed how regret complains that months are swept away like days, and years as months? Whereas impatience feels that days are years, and years are ages; and that all time moves along with leaden feet, not with swift wings. Our desires crave longer periods for indulgence, and murmur and complain that those periods are so short; our griefs, our anxieties, and our fears, push against the wheels of time, and bitterly complain that time goes on and lasts so long. If for instance you are in the midst of bright and joyous scenes, how fast do they pass away; and how deeply do you regret that they have been so brief! But if you are anxious about a son, a father, a brother, in the distant Crimea; and when every post that comes tells you of other hearts that are cold, and other spirits that have passed away; you are in such anxiety that you

feel as if minutes were extended into years, and years themselves extended into ages ; and you would give all the world that time would rush away like a lightning flash, and reveal the worst or the best. But in truth, though these things seem so, there is no real alteration in the march of time. The fevered beat is in our hearts, the slow and languid circulation is in our veins. The year 1855 drives over broken hearts and bounding hearts with equal and impartial speed ; and enters all its solemn facts, our responsibilities, and opportunities, and doings, in impartial registers ; in which the good we have done shall be retained imperishable as evidence of what we were ; and the evil we have done can be blotted out only in that precious blood which this day cleanseth from all sin. This great law of the fleetness of life has been well expressed in these words :

“ The more we live, more brief appear

Our life's succeeding stages ;

A day to childhood seems a year,

A year like passing ages.

When joys have lost their charm

And life itself is vapid ;

Why, as we near the falls of life,

Feel we its tide more rapid ?

Heaven gives our years of fading strength

Indemnifying fleetness ;

And to those of youth a seeming length,

Proportioned to their sweetness.”



How truly has Campbell expressed in these lines the experience of man ! though one could have wished he had added another verse, to explain the mystery in the light and love of God.

One measurement, and one of real worth, is when we measure time by the triumphs we have achieved over sin, by the trophies we have won for God, by the good deeds inspired by grace, by all the blessings that we have left like foot-prints on the sands of time in our journey from this world to a better. The clock-work of the sky will be disorganized ; the proofs of spring, and summer, and autumn, on the earth, will all pass away ; but the least good that we have done as Christians ; the very cup of cold water that we have given to a believer ; the little article we have knit for the soldier ; the little tract we have sent to do him good ; what we have given in any shape, or in any sphere, to him that needed it ;—will not be forgotten ; it is a measurement of time that will outlast the sun. You may forget ; you may ask, “ When did we see thee naked, and clothe thee ? When did we see thee in prison, and visit thee ? When did we see thee hungry, and feed thee ? ” But He will not forget,—“ Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Forget the months, the days, of this year ;

but recollect, with joyous gratitude to the grace that inspired it, the good you have done ; seek forgiveness for the evil that cannot be recalled ; and determine that, if spared to see the march and procession of future years, you will go into their now empty days and months resolved to cast something into them that will be blessings to you, to the world, and to mankind. Resolve that you will make the future joyous by the blessings you shed, by the good you do, by the compassion you show ; by clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, spreading the glorious gospel, hastening that day when the Redeemer, to whom you are indebted for all, and who is the glory of all, shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.

Does not every day and month whisper to you, and to some with deep and irresistible persuasion, "Thy word, O God, is truth"? Does not time clear up the announcements of eternity? Does not larger experience only confirm more and more the testimony of this blessed book, God's holy word? Has the past given you the satisfaction you expected to derive from it? Have you for instance become richer and prospered in the world? Do your balance-sheets, and your ledgers, and your account-books, show that you are very much richer this day than you were upon the corre-

sponding day last year? Let it be so;—let me ask you, are you now satisfied? Does this accumulated wealth add very much to your real enjoyment? Is it not true that what you thought would be a gratifying luxury in the distant perspective, by being now enjoyed has lost the form of a luxury and taken the common place of an indispensable necessity? Is it not true that what you thought would be to you rest, satisfaction, joy, is not so; and that you are no nearer at this moment the perfect rest, the entire satisfaction, of the soul, than you were when you first started on the race of life? You have surrounded yourselves with greater splendour; your wealth has enabled you to do greater good; but you know still that there is something in man's soul; a chasm—when, where, or how, it is not now necessary to explain—that no contributions from this world's sources can remove or adequately satisfy. It is the painful fact that man seeks satisfaction upon earth; but it is the grand truth, evolving from that fact, that nothing on earth can satisfy his soul. It was made for an infinite good; and till that infinite good return to its cold and defaced shrine, man will never know the peace that passeth understanding. Or have you this year had rounds of pleasure—I will say innocent gratification and pleasure? Have these

satisfied you? Do you not find that the greater the excitement you have passed through, not the greater is the satisfaction, but the greater is the depression that seems to follow it? Do you not feel that those pleasures through which you have passed—innocent I assume them to have been—were all vanity and vexation of spirit? Or have you risen a few steps higher on the ladder of ambition—where so many climb, and where he that gets highest treads down him that is below him? Have you attained honours that you never had before? Have you reached a climax that you never anticipated? Are you one whit more satisfied? Do you not feel that you are to be happy,—you are not yet happy? How do you explain this? The cattle on a thousand hills are happy, up to the capacity of their natures; the birds of the air, the fishes of the deep, have no aspirations beyond what they now are and enjoy. How is it that man is the only creature in this created world that cannot gather satisfaction from anything in it? The reason is, this is not his home, this is not his rest. He is an exile, he is a soldier on the field, a sailor on the ocean, a pilgrim and a stranger; and he can only approximate to the real happiness of which he is capable when his heart and his treasure are not in his counting-house, but beside the throne and

in the presence of the Eternal. If you have learned this great lesson, it is a most blessed and a most precious one—that there is no rest or satisfaction for man in this present world. If the past has failed to teach it, be thankful that, however painful the discipline, you begin to learn it. All life is a journey, not a home; it is a road, not the country; and those transient enjoyments which you have in this life, lawful in their way,—those incidental and evanescent pleasures which you may sip,—are not home; they are little inns only upon the road-side of life, where you are refreshed for a moment, that you may take again the pilgrim-staff and journey on, seeking what is still before you—the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

There is another lesson we may all learn from the past. We have not only found no satisfaction within, but we have found all outer things, animate and inanimate, God-made or man-built, undergoing change and decay. In early years every object overflowed with interest; everything in God's world shone in ceaseless sunshine; and happiness and hope seemed to stretch away into endless years before you. But how is all altered since you grew up to manhood! The scenes of boyhood are, when visited, now disenchanted of half their attractions; shadows sombre

and deep have fallen where bright lights gleamed before; and the very smoke of your native birth-place does not seem to your eye to curl so gracefully into the skies as it once did; the flowers of your native glen do not look so beautiful, the heather does not seem so bright; the stream that you were accustomed to does not give out, as it moves to the main, so sweet music. Why is this? Not that these have actually changed, but that all is changed within you; and therefore all is altered, modified, without. This is the universal law—nature looks very much to man as man's own heart beats. Depend upon it, after all—and if we have learned this lesson in the past by these changes, either within or without, we should feel thankful—it is not the home that makes the heart happy; it is the happy heart that makes the home bright. Hence, in the beautiful language of Isaiah, to a man who is at peace with God the very desert rejoiceth; the wilderness blossoms like the rose; for the brier there comes up the fir-tree, and for the thorn the myrtle-tree; and the wide world becomes lustrous and beautiful like a palace, because the little heart that looks forth upon it is at peace with God, and through God at peace with all mankind. If we were more anxious to cultivate our inner nature, and less careful about the cul-

tivation of the outer world, we should find happiness outside much more speedily. But it is also no doubt true that in the past outer things have changed in fact as well as in appearance to us. Thrones are less stable in Europe than they were; houses have gone a little nearer decay; lands that we called by our own names are far frailer in our grasp than they seemed to be in their trust-deeds. Temples, statues, mausolea, palaces, dynasties, are all older and nearer dissolution. We too are getting older; the rapid beat of the pulse of youth is fast merging into the languid tide of old age. Many a forehead that a few years ago was smooth and bright as marble is now beginning to be covered with those furrows that prove that the tide of life is fast ebbing. Many a heart that was full of hope begins now to be colder and more languid; and the whitening hair, as if catching the first rays of the light of another land, does prove, whether you like it or not, man is going to his long home; and the wheel is ready to pause in its action, and the golden bowl about to be broken at the fountain. But not only outward things are changed; our circles, our friendships, our acquaintances, our families, are all changed too. Some one has dropped from a circle that seemed cemented by affection or friendship, indissoluble for ever.

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There is not a home that has not some shadow on it, even beneath a Christmas roof-tree; there is not a family group out of which you do not miss some one that death has carried away like a flower, and made himself to you more lovely because he carries that flower on his breast. There is many a chair empty that used to be filled; and many a voice silent that used to ring with glad music. And even when you hear the sweetest music upon earth—the glad voices of young children—you are sometimes tempted in your forebodings to hear a melancholy minor run through it, telling you that these voices too may, sooner than you expect, be silenced in the shadows of death, and that glad music be hushed and stilled for ever. As we look back we see some that we loved have died on their last pillow, surrounded by all the assiduities, the sympathies, the prayers, of friends; some have been mowed down by the devouring pestilence, even in the midst of our own home. Some that we loved have perished in the Baltic or in the Euxine; or have dropped, weary with the march, or fallen heroically and honourably in the front of battle. Families that read this have stakes in the Crimea, either in the dead dust that is buried there, or the living hearts that throb there. Plague,—pestilence,—war,—almost famine, have



been with us. And when you listen to the words of statesmen, of senators, and of those who have discernment and understanding of the times, can you need proof that their hearts are literally failing them for fear of the things that are coming upon the earth? And they that can see the deepest and feel most are giving expression to those fears and doubts in reference to the future. Let us determine that this shall be the last day of indifference and insensibility to those great thoughts that ought to overwhelm and to interest us; the last day of a form of religion without its power; of a name to live by without its reality; of procrastination to the future of duties and privileges that ought to be realized and enjoyed in the present.

In the future there is much that is gloomy; but to a Christian nothing, nothing that ought to generate despair. God will reign in coming days, as He has ruled in the past; He is from one year to another, from everlasting to everlasting—He is God. Our duties remain, whatever difficulties stare us in the face; and, blessed be God! our hopes remain, our Saviour remains, our God and our Father remains. And, “though the hills shall be removed, though the mountains shall be cast into the midst of the sea, and though the waters rage with the swelling thereof; yet there

is a river whose streams make glad the city of our God ; God is in the midst of us, and therefore we will not be afraid." What does all this now teach us ?—Because the past has been so sad, and the shadow seems to grow darker, deeper, and broader in the future, we are not therefore to feel like the Stoic, and say, " Since it must be, it must be ;" nor like the Moslem, " We believe in fatalism ; it is so decided, and we cannot alter it ;" nor are we to leap to the opposite extreme, and act like the Epicurean, who says, " Well, since we must die, let us eat, drink, and be merry ; for to-morrow we die." That would be wretched indeed. No ; a Christian says, " Therefore I will look at the things that are unseen and eternal, not at the things that are seen and temporal. I will anticipate the rest that remaineth for the people of God ; and lodge my heart, with all its throbbings, its fears, its perplexities, there, and there only." Nay, a Christian often rises to his most heroic mood when he is in the midst of the deepest peril. I read last winter in a newspaper—what was so delightful—that the soldiers in the trenches—cold, and wet, and wearied, and hungry, beyond all precedent, and almost beyond our power to read the account of it—were seen reading their Bibles, while bullet and ball and shell were fly-

ing over or falling around them: and thus are Christians deriving their calm, their courage, their confidence, from this blessed truth;—that not only has every bullet its billet, not only has every sabre its mission, but also, this mortal may be laid in the grave, but no spear-point can touch the immortal that is within it. Death to a Christian is transference, transition; and, whether it be from the field of battle or from the bed of peace, it is equally, to one that loves this book, and holds fast this Saviour, and hopes through His blood, everlasting joy and repose. What a beautiful exemplification of this is the following letter of Col. Shadforth, addressed to his wife on the eve of battle!

*“ Before Sebastopol, June 17th, 9 P. M.*

“ My own beloved wife and dearly beloved children,

At one o'clock to-morrow morning I head the 57th to storm the Redan. It is, as I feel, an awfully perilous moment to me, but I place myself in the hands of our gracious God, without whose will a sparrow cannot fall to the ground. I place my whole trust in Him. Should I fall in the performance of my duty, I fully rely in the precious blood of our Saviour, shed for sinners, that I may be saved through Him. Pardon and forgive me, my beloved ones, for anything I may have said or done to cause you one moment's unhappiness. Unto God I commend my body and soul, which are His; and should

it be His will that I fall in the performance of my duty, in the defence of my Queen and country, I most humbly say, 'Thy will be done.' God bless you and protect you; and my last prayer will be that He, of His infinite goodness, may preserve me to you. God ever bless you, my beloved Eliza and my dearest children; and, if we meet not again in this world, may we all meet in the mansion of our heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ. God bless and protect you; and ever believe me, your affectionate husband and loving father,

"THOMAS SHADFORTH."

"That precious, eloquent, but brief record of piety and heroism—of a Christian's self-possession and a soldier's courage—of faith and trust in what a Saviour has done—of devotedness to what duty might demand, and of yearning sympathy with the near and dear inmates of a home he felt he might never see again—should be presented to every soldier of our army. A soldier need not be profane in order to be brave. He need not spend his spare moments in 'practical joking' in order to escape the imputation of weakness. Deep and fervent piety is not old womanishness. The Bible in one's knapsack is not evidence of superstition. The grace of God in a soldier's heart not only enables him to do justly and live soberly, but to fight like a hero and fall like a Christian for Queen and country, and in the cause of civilization against the ambitious assaults of a barbarous despotism. There never was a war in the history of our country in which so many soldiers of

simple-hearted and unpretending piety took a part, or in which so many Christians have stood where heroes have fallen. There is a church in the army as pure and holy as has ever met under fretted roof of grand cathedral, or knelt on encaustic tiles or tessellated pavement. Colonel Shadforth is a proof, and not a solitary one, that military bravery is not that vulgar animal impulse which it is too often and ignorantly thought to be, but a moral force, fed from a divine spring, and nourished by what that wonderful book the Bible inspires. I regard it as no mean augury of our ultimate success that such officers command our regiments in the East. It must be the highest consolation to the bereaved at home that a soldier's prayers are heard clear and distinct amid the roar of artillery, and that those mangled frames buried beneath the green sods of the Crimea have rendered up souls to heaven and to happiness, and that there is not an atom of their dust that will not hear the roll of the last trump, and, in the words of Colonel Shadforth to his wife, meet those left behind in the mansions of the just."

This world is not our rest. It is wearing away; the earth wastes, the mountains decay. Europe at this moment is restless; every man stands in every country in Europe with his hand upon his sword-hilt; every throne rocks. The volcano slumbers, the earthquake sleeps; the next outburst will follow. Its first was in 1848; the next shock of the earthquake of the seventh

vial we may expect very soon. We are to get peace, not from patching up the world, and crying, "Peace, peace;" but peace above the world, and in spite of the world, and from Him that made the world, and redeemed its people by His precious blood. Let us enjoy, in the next place, this blessed hope; that there remaineth a rest for the people of God—flowers that will not wither, fields that will not be torn by battle, or artillery, or war: a country whose peaceful shores shall be ruffled by no storm; into whose hospitable bosom the heir of God, the child of immortality, comes; where there is sunshine without a cloud; and where "blessed are the dead that rest in the Lord; for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." Let us not forget that the path from years that perish to the years that have no end is one and the same, Christ Jesus. He is better than the patriarch's ladder that connects heaven and earth, eternity and time. This city of refuge, this pathway to the skies, is not a church, or a chapel, or a cathedral, or a sect, or a denomination, or a system; but Jesus Christ, who covers all space, and is accessible to all that will; and by whom the greatest sinner, if he ask for it, may have instant access to a crown of glory.

Let us seek pardon for all the sins of the past.

The past is enough to condemn us. There is not a day in it that cannot testify against us; there is not a morning of it that has not opened upon our sin, iniquity, and transgression. And it is a very solemn thought that each year has registered what we loaded it with at the judgment-seat of Christ. We may do many things, but we cannot recall what we have left undone or what we have done in the past; no power can do so. What a solemn thought, that the sins of our hearts, the sins of our words, the sins of our acts, have all their echoes at the judgment-throne, where no human power can hush them, even if it would! But if no more than this were true, it would plunge us into despair. "If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark the iniquities of the past, O Lord, who could stand?" But here is the truth for the close of all,—a truth still fresh, still applicable; to which all are welcome to appeal this very moment with all the fears, the anxieties, the pains, and griefs of the heart—"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin," so that not one shall rise at the resurrection-morn to testify against us. "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Let life close upon us pleading this one text—"Blessed Jesus, let Thy blood cleanse my soul from all its sins;"

and as sure as there is a God in heaven it will be done ; for He is faithful who has promised ; He cannot lie. And let us, in the last place, seek God's Holy Spirit, to guard us from the sins of the past, to strengthen us for the duties of the future, to enable us to weep with them that weep, and to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to use the world as not abusing it, for the fashion of it passeth away.



## XII.

### LAST THINGS.

"The last day."—JOHN XII. 48.

I ENDEAVOURED to show what was designed by God in giving us so many means and elements of calculating the era at which we are arrived, and ascertaining on life's broad and desert sea the place we now occupy in reference to those bright and glorious shores which stretch far beyond. I showed that in taking a retrospect of the past, as it has swept away, with all its lights and its shadows, its hopes and its trials, we must have learned some lessons which probably we had not learned before ; or at all events have felt the depth of many an impression that had lain dead and cold in the intellect, but never descended to or reached the heart. I showed that we had learned at least that this world is not our rest ; that this has been brought home vividly to many hearts by the losses they

have sustained, the bereavements they have felt ; the changes, trials, and vicissitudes they have gone through ; and if so, there must be some intimation, external to the world, in which that experience is so deep and painful, revealing to us, "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." I turn now to some practical personal reflections fitted to profit and edify.

When the last day of this dispensation shall arrive, much that is now available for our salvation will be gone for ever. When the last day, not of a year, but of an age, shall come, every opportunity of seeking grace will have passed away. It will be the day of testing character that is, not of creating a character that is not ;—the day of reaping, either in tares for the flame, or in wheat for eternal garnerers, the seeds that we have sown in this present world. Suppose this day were the last of the age, and the great white throne and the dread Judge were there, and the books were opened ; have you to seek—what you would then give infinite worlds if you had—a God, a Saviour, pardon of sin, adoption into the family of God, fitness for the kingdom of heaven ? Were this day your last on earth, or were this day earth's own last day as it now is, are you ripe for gathering, are you prepared

to meet your God? You must feel this momentous thought in that day; anticipate the experience of it, lest that experience may be agony at last. Then the Sun of grace will have set behind the hills of the west, only to rise as the Sun of glory in the eternal east upon them that fear Him. The throne of grace will have been merged into the throne of judgment; and the gates that shut out all that defile, and shut in all that is holy, will be sealed as they will be shut for ever. Upon that last day, you will have heard your last sermon upon earth. A sermon is the least valued often of all things that are spoken and printed now; but it is a very solemn thing to hear; it is a very precious thing, however feeble if faithful, to be privileged to listen to. For what are sermons? Voices crying in the desert, "Prepare ye to meet your God." Their excellence is their earnestness, their simplicity, their faithfulness. Now, they may be vehicles of light, and life, and everlasting peace. Their echoes will rise and reverberate at the judgment-throne; but not as summonses to believe, but as witnesses either that you have profited by them, or that they have hardened you in your transgression. Suppose, then, that no more appeals were to be addressed to you; suppose that the day were

come when it shall be no more said, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;" when no kind voice will say, "Behold the Lamb of God;" when no earnest accent will reverberate in your hearing, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Are you now in that state in which such invitations will be unnecessary? Are you now what you would wish to be then, when what you are will endure for ever, and no transition from darkness unto light or from sin to holiness can take place any more? How dreadful if in that last day of the last dispensation—the one that now is—these words should be addressed to you, when you cry, "Open, open, Lord;" "I have called, and ye refused. Because I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." A day comes when that text shall be actual: it is not true now, it is not fulfilled yet. Have you sought God, and found him? Have you called, and been answered? Is Chris-

tianity a name, a profession, a decent robe; or is it an inner experience, a life, a power, in the sight of God and before all mankind?

In that last day the last prayer that will be heard on earth will be offered unto God, and no answer in mercy and in love can be given. Now, however, the suppressed moan of the lowly, humble, and believing heart cleaves the air faster than an angel's pinion, and is heard by God upon His throne amid the voices and songs of the seraphim. But at that day the loudest cry of the strongest spirit in its agony will provoke an echo, but it will obtain no answer. Now we may come with boldness to the throne; then there is no throne of grace to come to. Now it is, "Seek, and ye shall find;" then, "Ye shall seek me, but not find me." Now it is, "God never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek my face in vain;" then, "They shall call, but I will not answer them." At that day the last affliction that will be sanctified to the people of God will have been dealt out, no more to be repeated. We thank God often for His blessings; how rarely do we thank Him for the afflictions that He sends us, which are His richest blessings in disguise! The baptism of sorrow often prepares the heart, as the dew does the soil, for the baptism of the Holy Ghost. God knocks now at the door of every

heart by affliction, by trial ; but then He will knock at hearts no more. A day will come when the afflictions of the people of God shall cease as chastisements, for they shall have no need of them ; and when the afflictions of those that are not the people of God shall cease as admonitions, for their lot will have been fixed for ever. Realize that day ; conceive it is come ; and ask your own selves in the sight of God, What is my trust and hope against that day ?

I have addressed those who are not Christians ; let me turn to believers, and tell them on what they may calculate and expect as the features of the last day. When the last day of this dispensation shall arrive, the last tear that you will shed over sin will then be wiped away. You are now blessed in your mourning upon earth ; then and at that day you will be comforted for ever ; for God will wipe away all tears from all eyes, and there shall be no more weeping, or crying, or sorrow. At that day the last doubt shall have gone from your minds like a passing cloud from the sky ; the last suspicion of the love of Him whom having not seen ye love will be dissipated for ever ; the glass through which you now see darkly will be broken ; and those mysterious dispensations that you cannot understand,—that cross, the load and pressure of which you are

unable to bear,—you will then and there discover to have been messengers from God, reasoning of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment; and that there was as great a needs be that you should have gone through that baptism of sorrow as there was that Christ should have died upon the cross, or that you should have been washed in His precious blood. You will then discover that your bitterest cup was your most precious one; that your darkest and dreariest night was that in which you grew most; and that the roughest road, and the heaviest storm, and the most crooked way, which seemed to you leading you off from the promised Canaan, was the nearest route to the everlasting rest that remaineth for the people of God. You will find, what you feel now, that the bud had a bitter taste; but you will then discover, as you have not yet, that sweet indeed is the flower. At that last day the last sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be ministered. You will need no Bible there; for all space is radiant with its texts, and texts ten thousand times more precious still. You will need no sacrament of the Lord's Supper then; for you did it in remembrance of One who was not present bodily on earth, and in the expectation of the advent of One who is not yet come into the earth. But then there will be no more remem-

brance of Him, for He is present ; there will be no more expectation of Him, for He is come. The sun is risen, the morning star is not wanted ; the substance is present, the shadow is not needed ; the temple has had its last cope-stone and corner-stone laid upon it, the scaffold must now be taken down and put away for ever. In that day the last promise will be fulfilled, the last prophecy will be realized ; what is now prospect to your hearts will then be possession—and what a possession ! A possession exceeding all prospect, transcending all expectation ! till you say, as she of Sheba said of Solomon's grandeur, " Half the glory and excellence of that blessed land was not told us by prophet, by apostle, or by evangelist." The streams are sweet ; but how sweet will be the fountain ! The bread of our Father's house as it is distributed in crumbs is now precious, but how precious will be bread eaten in His own presence ; where " they shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more, neither shall the sun light upon them, nor shall there be any heat ! "

The last toil, and struggle, and labour, of which you have now the bitter and tearful experience, will have passed away. The march of duty will be finished, the journey of life will be done, your days and nights of weariness will be ended, you shall enter into rest. " You rest from



your labours, and your works do follow you." When one thinks of all the tribulations, the sorrows, the trials, the distresses, the sicknesses, the pestilences, the plagues, the famines, the battles, amid which, as amid the waves of a stormy sea, thousands every day are struggling for a precarious existence, we cannot but hail the prospect, and pray for the joyous advent, of that day, when the hopes of the humblest believer shall be realized, and this tangled web shall be unravelled, and these perplexing struggles, and toils, and trials shall be ended; and we shall hear the words—richer, sweeter, deeper, than the sweetest strains that ever angels sung,—“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

And when that day comes, those we parted with on earth, to see no more amid its busy scenes, its trials, and its troubles, to sympathize with us as we suffered, or to strengthen us in the battle of life, shall emerge again from the shadow of the grave. Countenances long hid shall have all the darkness rolled away; voices long silent shall be heard again; broken circles, completed; once happy groups, more happy than they ever were before. For at that day, when all things old shall pass away and all things new shall begin,—

"There shall be no more farewells to the dying,  
Or mournings for the dead ;  
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,  
Will then be comforted.

In heaven's great stillness and seclusion,  
By guardian angels led,  
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,  
They live whom we call dead."

We have thus seen what will be the lost privileges of them that are not believers ; and what will be the triumphs and the joys of them that are true believers. Let me add, that this old, weary earth, our present abode—wearied with the tears of her children that she cannot wipe away—will then be restored to more than its pristine beauty, and loveliness, and glory. The apostle says, "Creation groans and travails in pain ; waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God,"—that is, for the day when all God's redeemed people shall be manifest. This earth was intended to be our home ; it is now almost our penal colony. Meant to be the joyous and palatial residence of man, it is now ploughed up by artillery, broken into battle-fields, swept by the pestilence, convulsed by the earthquake, torn by the volcano ; and it furnishes graves for our dead as much as homes for our living. Earth, wearied with her groans, exhausted by her long baptism of tears, shall emerge at that day, purified by the

last fire, more beautiful by far than when God said over her at her creation in Paradise, "All is very good." And for this reason shall our earth be so beautiful; sin, the fever that convulses it, the poison that circulates through all its arteries and veins and material economy, of which earthquake, volcano, battle, murder, suffering are the sad and sorrowful offspring, shall be exhausted from her for ever and for ever. This earth needs nothing more done to her to make her amid the sisterhood of stars the fairest, and the loveliest, and the noblest of them all, than to have sin removed far away from it. There are landscapes in it so beautiful, panoramas so magnificent, associations, ties, friendships, affinities, relationships on it so dear, that if you could only say, "Here sin shall never intrude," you might wish, and could pray, "Let me live here for ever and for ever." The very remains of its departed magnificence indicate how grand it was; and these lingering remains are promises to us how grand it will be when the consecrating footstep of Him that redeemed it shall tread its surface again. Sin then shall be expunged from it; a new heaven and a new earth shall be, wherein dwelleth righteousness. And just as the soul when renewed by grace is made new, in contradistinction to the old man, our state by na-

ture ; and as the resurrection body is new in contrast to the old decaying body that was laid like a robe unfit for wearing in the grave ; so the new earth will be to the old earth—not another substituted for it, but the old one rebaptized, purified, regenerated ; a *genesis* having passed over it again no less mighty, and productive of blessings no less numerous, than the *genesis* that made it in the first six days all very good. And when sin shall be taken away from earth, the last battle will have been fought ; the last war, the beginning of which we are probably now entering on, will have been closed ; the sword will be beaten into the ploughshare, the spear into the pruning-hook ; the nations shall learn war no more. There will be no ambitious Autocrat to come like an avalanche from his cold and desert throne to overwhelm the nations of Europe ; there will be no slumbering passions in the human heart ready to ignite and burst forth with volcanic devastation ; there will be no misunderstanding between man and man to originate war ; and therefore there will be no armies, no battle-fields, no weeping widows and forlorn orphans, and Rachels that will not be comforted ; for the Prince of peace is there, and all things are peace for ever. The last sick-bed too will then have passed away. “ The inhabitant,” in

the beautiful language of Isaiah, "shall not say, I am sick." What a picture is that at the close of the Book of Revelation! one reads it and hears it like a strain of Handel's music, or even richer than that. "The city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." This is to be fulfilled in that very earth in which your dead sleep, and on which your living stand. This is not a scene, a transcendental scene, in a distant star; but a picture and a delineation of the blessed process through which this earth shall pass

when the last day of this last dispensation shall come ; and when the Christian shall not say with stammering lips, as faith enables him now when his dead go from him ; but when he shall be able to shout and sing with ecstasy unutterable and full of glory—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord." All those things that the world holds so fast will be dissolved. The wealth you accumulate, the honours you wear, the treasures that you trust in—all these things are to be fuel for the last flame. What a pity that a man should set that magnificent heart of his, which was meant to grasp the infinite and to be coëval with the eternal, upon things that are to be fuel only for the last flame! that he should try to satisfy the vast capacity of that magnificent ruin within him—his immortal soul—by the trash that perishes in the using! Let us set our affections upon things that are above ; let us place our treasure there ; let us sit loose to a world that dissolves while we grasp it, or flits like a spectre while we pursue it ; and rest upon what is reality, tread ground that is solid, place our treasure where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thief break through and steal.

And that last day, what a day will it be! "To you that are troubled," says the apostle, "rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day." And again, as he describes it in 1 Thessalonians, when he says, "For"—and here are words each syllable of which is comfort—"if we believe"—and we do believe, and have no doubt of it—"that Jesus died, even so them also which sleep in Jesus"—that is, the pious dead—"will God bring with him" to this present world. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord,"—then there shall be a world covered with a busy people when Christ descends into the midst of it,—“we which are alive,” and remain living when Christ comes again, “shall not prevent them which are asleep.” The word *prevent* is used in its old Saxon sense of *go before*,—*prevenio*, “to come before.” “For the Lord himself shall descend

from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." And the very first thing that takes place upon that day will be, "The dead in Christ shall rise first:" "then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." Whither? Lifted from the earth till this earth has undergone its last baptism of fire, is purified, and made fit for our dwelling: and then the new Jerusalem, the company of God's saints, who have been insulated till this earth has undergone its grand transformation, shall come down to earth; and the tabernacle of God shall be with men: "and there shall be no more tears, nor crying, nor sorrow, nor death, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." "Wherefore," adds the apostle, "comfort one another with these words." It is a blessed thought to a Christian, that his last day of his pilgrimage on earth is the birth-day of his life in glory! but it is a still brighter thought that the last day of this dispensation ends the tears of Christians, the groans of the earth, the opportunities of all; and ushers in the twilight of a morn that shall never know a close. And ought we not to pray for that day? ought we not to cry, "Come, Lord



Jesus"? ought we not to feel more profoundly that nothing can be right until the Restorer of all things comes? There will be no perfect Christians, no perfect churches, no perfect governments, no perfect nations yet. Nothing will be perfect till the Lord of perfection comes to make all things new. Already the ruins of our world are larger than its restoration; the graves of the dead more numerous than the homes of the living. Riches every day put forth wings, as a tree puts forth branches, and flee away. Decay strikes its impressions upon the things we most value while we clasp them the most avariciously. In a few years other eyes will gaze upon every pulpit from every pew; other hearts will be lifted up to God in prayer; other lips will celebrate His praise. The sea-bird will soon scream where great capitals stand; and the hoarse note of the raven will be heard where cathedrals and churches now are: but the soul—that which is really me—never dies; but lives in the brightness of glory or in the agony of misery for ever and for ever. Methuselah had his last day; the antediluvian world had its last day; Tyre and Babylon had theirs; we must have ours. The soul has no last day. As eternity comes nearer to us, are we nearer to God? Are we more solemnized by the anticipation of it—not saddened, but solemnized? Re-

ligion does not make people sad, but it does make them solemn, even in their joys. Every hour that sweeps past is an obstruction taken from between us and that last day ; every year that closes lifts us at least nearer to the judgment-seat. We are nearer eternity, nearer judgment, nearer God ; are we nearer also the rest that remaineth for the people of God ? This very day may be the dividing-line to some one between hope and everlasting hopelessness. This day may have in its bosom the prophecy of your everlasting state. Let us determine, then, that as for us and ours we will serve the Lord Christ. How solemn is it to die ! How much more solemn is it to live ! We are sowing seeds that will grow up into harvests of joy or harvests of sorrow. Every thought, every act, every word, every deed, will have its resurrection at the judgment-seat of Christ. What we are made in time is what we must remain throughout eternity. Death and judgment do not change character, they only stereotype and fix it for ever. " He that is unjust, let him be unjust still ; he that is holy, let him be holy still." We cannot recall the past : in this we are utterly helpless. All the wealth of all the courts of this world cannot call back a day. We cannot cancel a deed we have done ; we cannot wash out by a

whole ocean of tears a sin that has stained its current. But, blessed thought! we can seek forgiveness; and as sure as we seek it we shall have it. Blessed thought! we can plead the atoning blood of the Lamb; and as sure as we plead it its baptism will be upon us. We cannot recall past years; but we can present this day at the throne of grace; and we can seek, for all our thoughts, and words, and deeds, and transactions before it and in it, that cleansing which the guiltiest may have, and the purest and holiest can never do without.

## XIII.

### THE GREAT MULTITUDE.

"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."—REV. VII. 9, 10.

JOHN says, "I heard the number of them which were sealed; and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand,"—and so on. And then, passing from the number of the saved on earth to the palm-bearing multitude in glory, he says, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud

voice, saying, Salvation to our God." John says, "I beheld." This was a special favour, a great privilege. The veil was rent or drawn for a moment, the glass through which he saw dimly was broken, the intervening distance was spanned ; and he beheld the shining groups of the redeemed out of every land, clad in robes that were white like the snow, each bearing the symbol of a glorious victory ; and he revealed it to us not to satisfy our curiosity to know the numbers of the saved, but that, cheered by the bright spectacle, forgetting the things that are behind, and surrounded and encompassed by so great a cloud of witnesses, we might run with patience the race set before us, looking not to them, but to Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith.

There was "a great multitude." There will be more in heaven than the bigot will admit ; there will be fewer in heaven than the latitudinarian dreams ; there will be a great multitude. One can easily gather the elements of our expectation, not curious, but Christian, that the vast majority of the human family will be saved. It may be very true that the majority of an existing generation does not give the evidence of being Christian ; but a day comes when they shall all be righteous, and the teeming millions spread over the world in which we live shall all be baptized

in spirit, the heirs of glory, and the sons of God. One looks forward with joy to the blessed hope that heaven will contain a great multitude ; and they that are not there were never shut out by God. They were entirely self-excluded. In that great multitude will be patriarchs of ancient days, prophets, saints, apostles, martyrs, evangelists, and ancient Christians, Abraham, Isaac, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John, and Augustine, and Vigilantius, and Peter Waldo, and Luther, and Calvin, and innumerable others, clad in white robes, with palms in their hands, singing, " Salvation to our God." Some will come from the sands of distant deserts,—some from the depths of the unsounded ocean,—some from beneath the battle-sods that have grown green over the remains of them that lately fell in their country's cause and service in the East. The icebergs in the Polar realms will rend asunder when the trumpet sounds, and the dead that are there shall come forth. They that expired in the fires of martyrdom are there ; thousands who have suffered and been silent—the martyrdom the heart feels, but the trumpet does not roll abroad in multiplying echoes—will also be there. Not one blossom will be withered, not one sheaf will be lost, not one gem will be wanting. The complete number of the sons of God, the heirs of glory, will con-

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stitute the Church in heaven,—the mighty multitude that no man can number. Not one trace of disease, or of the smoke of the fires ; not one channel for a tear, nor memorial of one that has rolled in it, will be there. All the clinging garments of the grave are put aside ; all the marks of corruption have disappeared ; and innumerable as the stars in the sky, countless as the sands on the sea-shore, brilliant as the morning dew in an unsetting sun, beyond the limits of sect, unscathed by the distinctions of party, will be a great multitude that have no head but Christ, no name but Christian, and no song but salvation to our God and to the Lamb that sitteth on the throne.

But whilst we rejoice to look forward to such a bright group as this, let us try to ascertain in detail what its component elements are. It is a great multitude of all nations. The Jew restricted the gospel to his own ; he believed that beyond the plains of Palestine no glad sound could ring, no offer of mercy could be made. He thought religion was inspired for him, and for nobody in the world besides ; the limits that God laid down he made tighter, the distinctions that God recognised he wrote deeper. But now this multitude is composed not of Jews, but of all nations ; the monopoly of the Jew has be-

come the heritage of all mankind. The national reservoir which was once so full in Jerusalem has now overflowed and become a mighty stream, and where handfuls once drank whole nations now slake their thirst. The Jewish is now Catholic; the religion of the Hebrew has become the religion of humanity; and this is the essential character of Christianity,—it is a religion not for a *coterie*, nor a sect, nor a Church, nor a party; and he that tries to limit it to his own is sure to lose half its life, its excellence, and its value. If you trace its history, what land has it not visited, what colour and clime has it not touched and transformed! Tongues have ceased, tribes have withered to the roots. Priests have passed away without a word to declare that they once were; temples, and *basilicas*, and cathedrals, and pyramids are in ruins; but this divine Levite still walks the world, consecrating it wherever it comes; this angel with the everlasting gospel has stretched his pinion, and it neither faints nor wearies under equatorial suns, nor is it numbed amid polar snows; he gives token of a strength renewed as he flies, till the whole earth be covered with God's glory, and a mighty multitude stand before the throne, that no man can number. But not only has the Jewish ceased in reference to Christianity, but families, whole



families, have been introduced into it. "Of all nations," it is said, "and of all kindreds," that is, families. Shem, Ham, and Japheth once met in the ark of Noah; they meet in their descendants in the ark of everlasting happiness, and holiness, and peace. The African is just as welcome to the gospel, ay, and as fit for it, as the most polished and educated European. Nothing can be more monstrous than the notion some try to inculcate, that the African is a sort of intermediate being between the human animal, as they talk, and the brutes that perish; and that the negro is not capable of the cultivation, the elevation, that we have: this is a great error. No doubt the bodies of the human race vary, just as everything else does. The houses in this great city differ very much from each other: one is built of stone, and all the wealth of a bank is lavished upon its ornament; another is a very humble cottage; but in the humblest cottage and in the noblest hall the inhabitant is a man. So the body of the European may be more beautifully chiselled, the symmetry more exquisite, its adaptation to the inhabitant more complete; but in the humblest specimen of physical organization in Africa, and in the highest specimen of physical organization in England, there subsists living and latent an immortal and a glorious

soul. The outer shrine may differ ; the inner glory is the same. The gospel is addressed to all ; and therefore we read that in the group that composes the Church in glory are all kindreds ; Shem, and Ham, and Japheth ; the patriarch from his tent, the Jew from his temple, the Greek and the Roman from their civilization, the Arab from his desert, the Cossack from his steppes—all, of every kindred, each retaining his original idiosyncrasy, but all elevated, inspired, ennobled by the grace of God and the influence of the resurrection-morn. Heaven will not be composed wholly of white people, nor wholly of black people ; I do not believe that Adam was either the white of England or the black of Africa ; probably he was more like the Arab, or the Syrian. But whatever be the perfection of the human frame, it will be there ; and when our bodies shall be raised there will not be new bodies given to us, but the old bodies inspired, elevated, reconstructed, endued with immortality and with glory. And not only will there be all kindreds in this group, but there will also be all tongues ; “a great multitude of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.”

I do not see it hinted in the Bible that in heaven there will be but one universal tongue.

This is the crotchet of Rome, not the revelation of God. For what is language after all? The vehicle of thought, the mere clothing of things: and the variety of speech, instead of being a blemish, seems really the greatest possible beauty. All flowers have the same essential constituent elements; but how different is the camellia from the rose, the daisy, or the lily! God has made infinite variety of development upon the ground of an essential and an all-pervading unity. In the same manner, the highest music is not composed of one part, but of four. The purest light is composed of three or of seven colours; and thus the harmony of heaven may not be mere unison, or each inmate the mere copy of another; there may be infinite variety, and yet an all-pervading unity. But, you say, was not the division of tongues the result of sin? So it was; the division of tongues at Babel was the effect of sin. Among many excellent remarks that Dr. Wiseman makes when he does not treat of subjects to which he is committed, he says the result of the most elaborate investigation into the ethnology of our world and the structure of its tongues among the German, the French, and I believe he adds the English, investigators into the history of human languages, is the unanimous conclusion that all languages indicate affinities enough to prove a

common source ; but indicate rupture and variety enough to imply a grand disruption at some period of their history. In other words, the investigations of science have reached the assertion of the Word of God, that the tower of Babel is not a myth, a romance, but a simple and a truthful history. But it is objected, if the division of tongues arose from sin, would it not follow that what sin has done shall be annihilated, and what was once spoken in Paradise shall be the language of heaven ? I answer, the highest triumph of grace is not in bringing back what was originally in Paradise, but in taking what sin has done and turning that to the greater glory of God, and the richer manifestation of His goodness. So that while the different tongues that now exist may spring from sin, grace can take the variety that sin has made, and instead of allowing that variety to subserve the purpose of Satan, may make it subserve only more resplendently the purpose and beneficence of God. As a proof of this, Pentecost was not the selection of one tongue for all nations, but the consecration of each man's own tongue to convey the wonderful works and ways of God. Thus we expect in that group will be all tongues, purified and disinfected from the taint of their passage through this world, and made together to express the glory and to be the vehicles

of the praise of Him who made all things by His power, redeemed all in His mercy, and out of the intensest evil has educed everlasting and glorious good.

Such is the constituent character of the group. They stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb. This shows the change that has passed upon them. They are standing in the immediate presence of God. When John saw the glory of God, we are told in the Apocalypse, "I fell down at His feet as dead." In this earthly tene-ment he was not able to endure the intense glory of heaven. But these not only endure but enjoy it. It is the very sight they love, it is the very air they breathe; they are like Him because they see Him as He is; the promise being, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." They are evidences of the fulfilment of Christ's prayer, "I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may be where I am, that they may behold my glory." They stand before the throne in that light which no man now can see or has seen.

Their attitude is remarkable; they *stand*. The word *stand* is used in the Psalms to denote acceptance. "The wicked shall not stand in the judgment." "If thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who could stand?" But this

group have ceased to feel that impossibility; "they stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb." All their sins are blotted out, all their transgressions put away, their hearts are sanctified, their nature pure; and they can now bear to be seen in that intense light which reveals specks in the sun, flaws in the angels, faults in all. And they stand too, we are told, before the Lamb. This is to remind us that it is through Him they got there, and that it is by Him they stand there;—He is the centre to which as *radii* they converge; His name, His praise, what He did by His cross and what He does by His crown, constituting the burden of the richest songs, the study of their inquiring minds, and the admiration of all that are there. Or perhaps the word *stand* may denote, they are ready to execute His will, prepared constantly to do service to Him; as servants stand in the presence of a king to go forth and execute his behests in every province of his wide-spread empire.

They are clad in white robes. What robes are these? Not the robes of primal innocence; they were lost in Paradise, and are now mingled with the corruption of all things. Not the robes that Adam bequeathed to them after he fell; for they are unfit to appear in before the presence of God and of the Lamb. Then what robes are

these? Robes they have washed, in the language of the same chapter, and made white in the blood of the Lamb. It is their outer aspect, and therefore the declaration of their only title of admission into heaven. Christ took our tainted robes upon Him and bequeathed His spotless robes to us. He was made our sin that we might never taste its bitter penalty; we are made His righteousness that we may for ever enjoy His everlasting glory. In Christ is our title, justified by Him is the ground of our acceptance. Those white robes are not their own, they are imputed; and they reflect for ever and ever the glory of Him that imputed them. This is the only title of admission; and, blessed be God, it is a title freely offered to all. The guest that went in without it was speechless; he had no apology, or excuse. Why? Because it was freely offered to him, just as it was offered to every guest that was there. And if any one appear at the judgment-seat, at the gates of glory, without the shining robe, the resplendent title, it will not be because God's decree excluded him, but because he refused to put it on, and thought his own raiment was good enough to appear in the presence of God.

But not only are they clad in white robes, but they have also palms in their hands. In the

calendar of the Church of Rome is a day called Palm Sunday; and on this day accordingly palm-branches are carried in their cathedrals, and are duly blessed amid pomp and splendour in the presence of the people; that Church, ever true to its character, holding fast the dead symbol, whilst the inner life of which it was the exponent is gone and perished for ever. But the palms held in the hands of this palm-bearing multitude are not insignificant and unsuggestive things, but full of meaning and instruction to us. A conqueror in ancient times was received on returning from the battle, carrying in his hand a palm-branch. The inscriptions on monuments prove this; the constant allusions to it in sacred and profane writers equally prove it; and the fact therefore that this group has each a palm in his hand denotes they are conquerors; and have passed successfully through all the perils and the trials of a protracted warfare. Here we are soldiers, our condition is that of warfare; but our hope is victory; the symbol of it is the palm in the hand of him that is clad with the white and the shining robe. In this world there is war. This is not the region of peace, it is not the realm of conquest, it is the season of battle, the fiercer that it is inner and not outer. There are wars more dread than that



which the Muscovite wages with the Osmanli, or we with the one against the other; the war described in the New Testament as being with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. Far sterner battles have been waged in individual bosoms than ever have been fought and finished on historic battle-fields. Many a one who could lead his victorious troops to victory never learned, or rather never was able, to conquer himself. The greatest conqueror in the sight of heaven is not he whose name is registered in the annals, and inscribed on the monuments, of grateful nations, but he that conquers the evil that is within in the strength of Him who is offered to the poorest, and whose strength is equal to the wants of the weakest. What is this warfare, and what is its nature? It is a warfare with Satan. Many think Satan a figure of speech; and, alas! they that think so have received instruction from the very Satan whose personality and existence they thus explain away. But there is no doubt that there is an archangel fallen; possessed of all the subtlety of the serpent, all the ferocity of the lion; a being so sunk and fallen, that our ruin is his only delight, our destruction his only trade; and the incidental gleams of joy that pass athwart his countenance or that electrify his

spirit rise from the success he attains in ruining and destroying souls. I know not a more awful proof of Satan's power, than that he can penetrate the depths of the heart, speak to the conscience, persuade without words, enchain without iron links, and drag a captive at his chariot-wheels, the very man that boasts he is free, and never was the slave of any. When we shall take our place in that shining group and gaze at the palm in our hand, the symbol of a warfare that has ceased, and the evidence of a conquest that has been won, we shall be so persuaded of Satan's power and Satan's might that we shall learn then, as we never learned before, that nothing but a Divine power within us could have made us conquerors, nothing but Almighty strength made perfect in our weakness could ever have brought us here. But there is another element that we have to war with, the world. Perhaps the world is not properly an enemy, but rather a weapon wielded and used in Satan's hand. It comes to you offering to-day a place, if you will only give up your principle; another day it offers you honour, if you will only resist that other thing called conscience; another time it offers you wealth, if you will only shrink from duty. The world's smiles are far more perilous than the world's hatred, persecution, and reproach; and never are

we more deceived than when we are the most pleased, and give the largest hospitality to the smiles, the promises, and the flatteries of the world. We all know that, so long as we have five senses, what gratifies them will have prodigious power with us. But has not God left much to gratify them within limits that are holy? It is only when these limits are exceeded that the world has gained the battle and that we have disastrously lost it. Another foe we have to encounter, if indeed a distinct foe it can be called, is sin ; and the worst of it is that it is everywhere. Sin is in the head, in the heart, in the conscience, in the hand ; it is in every nerve, and fibre, and muscle of our physical economy. And this sin, ever present, a lodger that we do not like, and that many dare not eject,—a power that we submit to be led captive by oftener than we resist and endeavour to expel,—the palm-bearing multitude have found not only expiated by a Saviour's blood, but extirpated from their hearts by a Saviour's Spirit ; and the palm in the hand is the proof that they are fit for heaven, the white robe that they wear is the proof that they are entitled to heaven ; and thus having the right to be there, and the qualification that makes their being there enjoyment, they constitute the great multitude that no man can number, the company of


the redeemed out of every kindred, and people, and nation, and tongue, who have overcome through the blood of the Lamb, and are now before the throne, and serve him day and night without ceasing. Their battles are now over, their warfare is accomplished ; they have fought the good fight, they have reached the prize ; the battle-field is left far behind, the shield is needed no more ; the sword is not beat into the ploughshare, but it is transmuted into the palm, and they neither learn nor love war any more.

The last feature in their character is that they sing, " Salvation unto our God and to the Lamb." Now if this be the model Church, of which every Church upon earth ought to be in some degree a copy, how truly evangelical is every *trait* in its character ; how truly evangelical is the very song they sing ! Not " salvation unto us," as if we had reached it by our own power ; but " salvation unto our God and to the Lamb." When a Church on earth speaks much of itself it is an ominous feature ; when it speaks entirely of itself it is a thorough apostasy. This group in heaven say nothing of what they did ; the burden of their song is, " Salvation unto our God and to the Lamb ;" that is, His be all the glory, ours all the comfort. Now it is plain that in this group there is not one single Socinian, or, as he is com-

monly called, Unitarian. I do not say that the Unitarian will not be saved ; on this I have no right to pronounce ; but I do say, if this be a portrait of heaven, that the Unitarian is not there. How could he ascribe salvation to the Lamb ? From the commencement of the Apocalypse to its close Jesus is the object of worship ; angels adore Him ; the glorified spirits adore Him ; and if a Socinian may be saved below, it is quite certain he must have left his Socinianism behind him before he mingles with the white-robed group, receives the palm in his hand, and sings, " Salvation unto our God and to the Lamb." One cannot see the shadow or hear the song of a single Romanist there. The salvation is not ascribed to any saint, angel, patriarch, or apostle. There are none of the " Glories of Mary " in the anthems of the redeemed about the throne. There is not one single " Salve, Regina ; " not one solitary " Ave, Maria." It would be an awful discord, it would be an intrusive interruption of the glorious strain ; every individual there says, " Salvation unto our God," He only is the author of it ; " and unto the Lamb," He only is the purchaser of it ; and to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit alone be all the glory, the honour, and the praise. I do not say that the salvation here spoken of is the only study in heaven. I do not believe that

the study of the gospel will be the only study that is there. All creation is full of exquisitely beautiful and suggestive thoughts that give glory to God and to the Lamb. But certainly the burden of every song, the key-note of the richest anthems, will be salvation. They will see earth in its light, themselves in its lustre, and all things radiant with the glory of Him who redeemed them by His blood, and made them kings and priests unto our God and His Christ.

They sing but one song. Many nations, many kindreds, many tongues are there, but only one song is heard. Why? Because its key-note is one, because its object, its glorious object is one. The "Hosannah" of ancient Israel is translated into the "Hallelujah" of the Church that is in glory; and as all look to one blessed Saviour, and all honour one God, and feel indebted to Him for all they are and have for ever and ever, they sing with that harmony which none can disturb, that unity which no difference can injure. And, lastly, it is said they sing it with a loud voice. There are no cold hearts in heaven; every one in that group is in earnest. Their hearts are loaded with the recollections of a thousand blessings; and therefore earnestly, intensely, from the very heart they sing, "Salvation unto our God and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."



The tribes numbered by Moses and Aaron have all passed away; nor should we desire a place in those once illustrious catalogues that have now ceased to have a place in the archives of the history of our world. But there is a book in which our name ought to be; there is a catalogue from which to be wanting is the most awful calamity that man can experience. Is our name, not in the register of Moses, but in the Lamb's book of life? Is it written there in the sparkling light of heaven? Have you any reason to believe from anything you are, external or internal, objective or subjective, that you are a child of God, an heir of Christ; and that there is a niche in that temple, a seat in that palace, a harp in that choir for you as an expectant of heaven, an heir of God and of Christ Jesus? One marvels how men whose days are a hand-breadth, whose existence is so precarious, who are crushed before the moth, and when crushed do not cease to live, but only cease to live in this world,—standing on an isthmus wasted by the waves of every year, and washed by the rolling inward billows of eternity,—how men standing in such a position refuse to look into the future, or to ask, What am I? Whither am I going? Is there any reason to hope that I shall form one of the holy and happy group that is above? This world is not

our home, it is a mere middle paasage ; it is the desert march of pilgrims looking for the joyous home of saints that are about the throne. You have not to do something in order to be destroyed ; you have to lay hold on something to save you. Most people think they never can be lost except they do some monstrous crime. The fact is, you are lost by birth, lost by nature ; and to be saved you must undergo a grand process, lay hold upon a great Saviour ; and only through His blood, and by His Spirit sanctifying you, can you hope to be clad in those white robes and to carry those palm-boughs of victory and of triumph. The vast importance of the present moment is this ;—that every Sunday as it passes you have taken a step in one direction or the other. Every Sunday you have advanced a portion of your march to heaven or to hell. There is no neutral, insulated person on earth. There is no one occupying a position from which he can say, I have neither gone backwards nor forwards ; but, sure as the heart beats, so sure the feet are travelling either to heaven or to hell. The vast importance of the present moment is this ; that we are now sowing broad-cast upon the earth seeds that will grow up into harvests of everlasting misery or harvests of everlasting joy. We are now candidates for eternity, we are building for happiness



or woe. Whilst I speak and write, and you read or hear, time is fast rushing away. The clock of St. Paul's Cathedral does not strike any one hour within hearing of the same people in whose hearing it struck the last hour. Two or three that heard it strike eleven never hear it strike twelve; two or three that hear it strike twelve will not hear it strike one. There is a ceaseless funeral march, a continuous procession of souls to the judgment-seat; and if our eyes were opened we should see the whole air peopled with souls rushing to the judgment; and if our ears were unstopped we could hear the trumpet of judgment summoning every moment to the Great White Throne. Time passes; the morning comes like a bride, the evening departs softly and sweetly like a benediction, reminding us to ask, Are we saved or are we not? Let not ours be that awful recollection, "The summer is past, the harvest is ended, and we are not saved." Do we belong to that group? Am I sure of it? The possibility that we may be, should remind us to breathe to Him the prayer that occurs in the ancient *Te Deum*, "Number us with Thy saints in glory everlasting;" incorporate us with this happy family; make us stones of this no mean city. Heaven is not a solitary place, a hermitage, a conventual cell, where each is insulated from the other in loneliness. All

the imagery employed denotes that our future state is a social condition: it is a city, it is a country, it is the general assembly of the church of the first-born. Christianity does not destroy our social feelings, it consecrates them. Jesus, who had so many souls to save, had a friend in Lazarus, intimate friends in Martha and in Mary. And those friendships which have been reciprocated below will not be destroyed, but purified and consecrated for ever. The future is the scene of perfect knowledge. If I am in that shining group, shall I be there and not know my next neighbour? Shall I be in heaven and not know him that stands beside me? Will Moses fail to recognise Aaron; will Abraham fail to recognise his beloved Sarah or Isaac? Will the Patriarchs not know their sons? Will heaven be a place where all those thrilling and beautiful recollections have perished for ever in the bosom of the saved? Has the wave of oblivion washed out every trace that was there? No, no; but memory, or rather the heart more than the memory, will not consent to let its imagery fade out till the grand originals appear. The light of truth shall fill every mind, and a sea of love shall overflow with its spring-tide every heart. The glass shall be broken, the veil shall be rent; heaven is a home, its inhabitants are brothers and sisters.

It is a day without a night, a sky without a cloud, and a sun without a setting. "Oh that I had wings," may many say, "like a dove, that I might be there and be at rest." It will not be the extinction of what we are, but the inspiration, consecration, ennobling of all that we are. God made us at the first; what sin has done will be expunged, but what God made will be restored, reconstructed, and beautified. It is the scene of true unity. There is no united Church here below; but there the Church is one. I do not expect that in this world there will be perfect unity, as there is no such thing as perfect love, perfect holiness, perfect peace, perfect happiness. There will be differences upon earth; let us differ in good temper and in Christian feeling. But there all these differences are covered with the spring-tide of everlasting light, and love, and truth. That multitude is not composed of natives. In that shining group there is not one native of heaven. They are all colonists, all immigrants, they were on earth what we are now; they came out of tribulation, out of great perils, out of poverty, and sickness, and sorrow. And if they got there, why not I? The road that they beat smooth by their feet is accessible to us; the bosom of the same Father is open to us; the same happy home will spread its roof over us.

It is one of the most solemn thoughts in the Bible that all this magnificent glory, blessing, peace, may be had by any human being for asking ; and that if we lose it, and lose it for ever, the most bitter and rankling recollection throughout eternity will be that we deliberately repudiated and rejected it.

## XIV.

### CONCLUSION.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."—1 Cor. xv. 58.

IN the 15th chapter of First Corinthians there is the most striking and probably the most eloquent exposition of the resurrection of the dead contained in the Scriptures. Paul ends it with an inference, or illative advice; "Therefore, my beloved brethren." This implies that the sentiment or the duty inculcated is an inference drawn logically from the premises previously laid down. What are these premises? He says all nature shows by its beautiful analogies that the resurrection of our sleeping dead is possible; these do not indeed prove it, but they make it possible. For parties to quote the changes of nature, the transformation of the chrysalis into the golden-winged butterfly, or of the root in the earth into the fragrant moss-rose; and to say that

these prove the resurrection from the dead, we have already shown to be absurd. They are very precious as analogies between God's revealed work and God's outer work; they are very important as illustrations of the possibility of such a transformation as we contend for, but no more. Turn to the cave of Joseph of Arimathea in which the dead Christ lay in a beautiful garden; the season of the resurrection an Eastern spring, when nature bursts into blossom almost with the beauty and the instancy of the blossoming of Aaron's rod. Yet in that fair garden the women and the apostles did not say, "Because this garden has thrown off its winding-sheet of winter snow, and put on its resurrection-ropes of blossom and green leaf, therefore we believe Christ shall rise from the dead." They could see no proof there; they dare not thus reason; and our so reasoning is not correct when we argue that analogy proves the fact; it only illustrates the possibility of the fact. Well, says Paul, because all nature's analogies show the possibility of the resurrection; secondly, because Christ's resurrection is proved; thirdly, because his resurrection is that of the first-fruits of them that sleep; fourthly, because so many credible witnesses attest it; and fifthly, because so rich a glory is the issue of our resurrection with Him; "Therefore,"

on all these accounts, "my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Having ascertained the connexion of this illative word *therefore*, let us divide the whole passage into three distinct heads, which will embrace all. "Be stedfast, unmoveable;" there is the work of faith: secondly, "Always abounding in the work of the Lord;" there is the labour of love: and thirdly, "Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord;" there is the patience of hope. You have, therefore, the whole passage comprised under three heads; the work of faith, the labour of love, the patience of hope; these three let us try to illustrate. First, the work of faith. "Be stedfast, unmoveable." Let me explain the meaning of the words. The word here translated *stedfast* means, "be firmly built upon that secure basis, that firm foundation, which is laid in Zion; and do not move from place to place, and be unsettled in your deepest and innermost convictions." The phrase, again, *unmoveable* means, "Resist every effort whether of force or seduction to dislodge you from the foundation on which you have been placed." The first, "Be stedfast," is the place of permanence and safety; "Be un-

moveable," is the power of resistance to every outward attack. The first, "Be stedfast," means that in our own personal convictions we remain firm, decided, determined; "unmoveable" implies we are not to yield to any external pressure or any attractive influence, however powerful or seductive it may be. "Be stedfast" in your belief, and trust and confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the work of faith. But what constitutes the work of faith? The very first act is that ye believe on the only begotten Son of God. Faith in Jesus, reliance upon Him as a personal and living Saviour; trust, confidence in what He is, in what He has done, in what He has secured, in all He promises, in all He declares, and acting upon these as realities, treating promise as performance, declarations as facts, resting upon them as the most solid basis on which we can build the superstructure of our hopes and peace—this is primarily the great work of faith. Rest on the rock, a fixture; cling to the tree of life, a parasite feeding on it and supported by it; hold fast the great foundation, and let nothing move you from it. And therefore he adds, "be unmoveable." I have said "Be stedfast" is your own inner, firm, unswerving adhesion to Christ and to Him crucified; and "unmoveable" is your resistance to every outward force that



is directed to dislodge you or to take you away from your sure position. The first, "Be steadfast," is explained by the apostle when he says, "Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." The second, "Be unmoveable," he explains in another text by, "Be not tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;" in other words, "Be unmoveable." Satan's two great efforts are, either to shake your confidence within, or, if that defies him, to displace your position by a force or a temptation or provocative without. Now the command of the apostle is, that whether Satan come to you as the roaring lion, that is, in the form of force from without directed against you to upset you; or whether he come to you as the cunning serpent, insinuating himself into the corners and crevices of your hearts, there to deposit poison and the seeds of ruin; whether he comes to you in the one or the other capacity, you are called upon to resist him, to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And the best way to stand firm he shows by the connexion is never to stand idle. "Be steadfast, unmoveable;" and, in order to continue so, "abounding always in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as

ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." If you are beset with temptation, not only pray, but enter upon active, Christian, beneficent work. That man is always safest who is most busily engaged in works of usefulness, beneficence, and mercy. The highest philosophy is contained in the rhyme of the nursery, "Satan always finds something for idle hands to do." If therefore you would be stedfast, if you would be unmoveable, if, in other words, you would be characterized by the work of faith, which is our first division, take care that you engage in the labour of love; be "always abounding in the work of the Lord." Let us try to ascertain what this is. The very first work of the Lord in which you are to abound is yourselves to be satisfied that you are in Christ Jesus, not having your own righteounness, but His. For, says our Lord, "This is the work of the Lord, that ye should believe on Him whom God has sent." And the very next work of the Lord that necessarily devolves upon you will be to spread what you have learned, to make known what you know. A person that has anything worth knowing always feels it is worth communicating. And all the great blessings of the gospel are not selfish monopolies given to the few for their luxurious enjoyment, but solemn trusts imparted for diffusion amid the

multitudes of mankind. Hence the very second labour of love in which you are called upon to engage is to spread what you know, to become servants because you are saints ; to light many candles from the one candle lighted in your hand, which does not burn the less brightly that ten thousand have been kindled from its flame. This labour of love must be the Lord's work—"always abounding in the work of the Lord." But what is necessary to render your work the Lord's work? Your motive must be His, your end must be His, and the way in which you fulfil it must be His. Every work that will bear His name, His superscription, must be begun in His name, continued according to His law, and closed in order to accomplish His glory. And therefore when you give to be seen of men, this is your work, not the Lord's work ; when you hear the gospel to be pleased, but taking care to fend off everything said that would profit, that is not the Lord's work, but your own ; or when we preach the gospel to please men, not to do them good, it may be clothed in the outward garb of the Lord's work, but it is man's work, and one of the worst works of man. It is requisite therefore in order to engage and to be abundant in His work that it should be in His name, for His glory and in obedience to His will ; and then the splendour of

the Author and the Inspirer of the work will cover with its light the performer of the work ; the lowliest will be ennobled by the dignity of a toil which seems to the vulgar eye to have all the meanness of earth, but in the judgment of God is clothed with all the magnificence of heaven. And therefore he says, " Always abounding in the work of the Lord." And he adds an expression here that shows that we must be more than ordinary workmen ; that if we be Christian men we must be eminently so. He says, "*Abounding in the work of the Lord.*" We must not only not be barren, we must not only bring forth fruit ; but, placed on the brow of a sunny hill, fenced round by the attributes of Deity, shone upon by His sunbeams, refreshed by His dew-drops, dignified by His blessings, followed by His mercies, we must abound in fruit. " Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit." In other words, the highest Christians, who have drunk deepest of the gospel's consolations, are thereby and therefore obliged to be the best and noblest specimens of what Christianity can make them. You are to be living epistles, you are to bring forth fragrant fruit. It is not enough that you act and live like the rest of the world ; you tread a loftier level, you enjoy a nobler companionship, you are engaged in a Divine work,

you serve a blessed Master ; you work from a motive that has spring enough to cover the wide world with the expressions of your liberality, and sympathy, and service. It is not meant that a Christian abounding in the work of the Lord is in any respect to be eccentric, or to alter his ordinary phrases, or to put on a long face, or to assume a peculiar tone, or to wear an odd garb. This is not Christianity, but the caricature of it. There is intense simplicity in real religion. See an illustration of this in the character of our blessed Lord. I have often thought that the outward appearance of our Lord is so great a contrast to all pretenders that have come in His name that it alone is conclusive. He walked the streets like other men ; assumed no peculiar garb, spoke in no strange manner ; He ate at the Publican's table, sat down with the Pharisee at his feast, conversed with His disciples as friend with friend, as teacher with pupil ; and all that the world could say was, that He came "eating and drinking ;" that is, living like other men : and because He did not come as an ascetic, a Puritan, a precisian, a monk, they therefore said He was "a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners." So the Christian, imitating his blessed Lord, must not because a Christian do odd things, or talk in an odd manner, or wear a coat of peculiar colour, or go out

of the world and live in a cell, or never dare to smile or to laugh or to be merry. Such things are the incidental extravagances of good men, not the fruits of Christian character. There is a simplicity and yet a grandeur in Christian character that always breaks through the outward shrine ; and like " wisdom," as our blessed Lord speaks, " is justified of her children."

We are not only to bring forth abundant fruit, or to be abounding in the work of the Lord, but we are to be always so. It is, "*Always* abounding in the work of the Lord." The work of the Lord is not hearing sermons ; this is learning what is the work of the Lord. The work of the Lord is in the shop, on the Exchange, in the court of justice, in the House of Commons, in the field of battle, on the quarter-deck ; wherever Providence has placed us, there we find the work of the Lord. Some have the Popish notion that they do the work of the Lord only when they sit in holy places, hear holy words, join in holy service, and that the oftener they do so they abound the more in the work of the Lord. You come to the house of God to learn what the work is, and you go out into your shops and into the world to demonstrate what the work is. And therefore to abound in the work of the Lord is not to hear a sermon every day, but it is to live a sermon

everywhere. To abound in the work of the Lord is to bring forth those fruits that show that your roots are in the clefts of the rock, that your leaves are refreshed by the dews of heaven, and that you bask in the sheen of an unsetting and a holy sunshine. You are to abound in the work of the Lord always, at all times, everywhere; in every place. You are not to be the mountain-torrent fed by the thunder-shower, overflowing its banks to-day and to-morrow dried up; but the sweet silent stream that rises from a deep and unseen spring, moving onward, swelled by successive tributaries, until it is lost in the infinite and endless main. Christianity is not a thing of fits and of starts, but a persistent power. It is not the electric element gathered into a jar, that sparkles on the Sunday when touched by the word of the preacher; but the electric element in the shape of gravitation, binding orbs into harmony, giving fertility to the poorest soil, and order, blossom, and beauty to all things. "Be stedfast, unmoveable; always abounding in the work of the Lord." Thus we see from these exhortations of the apostle that all practical character is necessarily the product of Christian life. What doctrine could be more abstruse than that of the resurrection? If some one had preached a sermon very much in the words of the 15th chap-

ter of 1 Cor., people would have said to themselves at the close, "What a speculative sermon! What does it matter to us what body rises or how it rises? What a pity to waste a precious hour in such a speculative discussion!" But the apostle did not think it speculative. No real truth is ever unproductive or merely speculative. All truth is by its very nature practical; just as all life is by its very nature living. If a man have life he shows that he has it; and if a man have truth in his head sanctified and deposited in his heart, that truth never can be barren; it will abound in all the fruits of practical religion. And those very doctrines that seem to us intensely speculative, when we see further and know better, will be found to be like some of those secret and inappreciable elements in the soil of the earth, which are essential to its fertility, and to the maintenance of vegetable life. When a chemist analyzes a handful of black earth in which a rose-tree grows, he can tell you there is so much carbon in it, so much mineral matter, so much of other ingredients; but if he were to take all those elements into which he has analyzed this handful of earth and re-combine them, he would find that his soil, formed of the very same elements he has discovered in the natural soil, will not grow roses. So those doctrines in Scripture which seem to us



intensely transcendental are like those inappreciable elements in the soil which the chemist cannot detect, but without which the abounding fruits of practical religion will not be shown. There is no such thing as a speculative dogma, or a barren fact, from the commencement of Genesis to the close of Revelation, in God's holy word. So it should be in our experience. Where there is life there will be living ; where there is fire there will be warmth ; where there is sunshine there will be light ; wherever truth is savingly held fast there will be abounding fruits of practical godliness in the life.

Thus we have seen first the work of faith ; secondly the labour of love ; let us now notice in the third place the patience of hope ; " Knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Christianity is called a work ; not a sinecure. Because we do not work in order to deserve heaven, it does not follow that we canonize indolence, apathy, and inactivity. Men are so hasty in leaping to conclusions : because they hear the preacher saying that heaven is the reward of nothing done by you, nothing done in you, nothing deserved through you, they instantly adopt the conclusion, " Therefore let us sit still and do nothing at all." But the apostle shows that the very opposite is correct reasoning ; for

he says, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling:" if he had stopped there we should have thought it was all our own work; but what does he add? "for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." The natural man would reason, "God works in me to will and to do; therefore I need not work;" but the apostolic reasoning is, "God works in me; therefore I must work out my salvation with fear and trembling." So here the apostle calls it the work of the Lord. It is not enough to say, "Lord, Lord;" but also to do His work; and to do it with the greater fervour, and the greater force, just because it springs from heaven a present possession, the back-ground and the basis of our working, not the end and the purchase of it. But not only does he call it a "work," but he also calls it in this passage a "labour,"—"Always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your *labour* is not in vain in the Lord." The two Greek words are perfectly distinct in the original; the one denotes simply work, but the other denotes toil, severe toil, great labour. It is expressed in such passages as these: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate;" the Greek word there is, rendered literally, "Agonize to enter in at the strait gate." "Run the race set before

you, looking unto Jesus ;” “ run,” not walk, “ the race,” where there is competitorship, “ set before you, looking unto Jesus.” “ Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” But it is most interesting, on the other hand, to notice that this patience of hope leads us to see that this work in which we are to abound is also called the work of the Lord ; it may be our labour, but it is His work. He calls it ours to indicate duty ; he calls it the Lord’s to indicate the strength in which we are to do it. He calls it in one passage our labour, that we may feel our responsibility and obligation ; but he calls it in the other passage the work of the Lord, that he may show it is done in His name, in His strength, according to His promise and for His glory. Here, lastly, is the blessed hope ; “ Your labour is not in vain ;” this conveys vastly more than the naked words seem to imply. It means, your labour will issue in overwhelming and glorious success. “ Great,” says our Lord, “ is your reward in heaven.” The nature of the reward he leaves in God’s hands ; but the certainty of the reward he asserts ; “ it is not in vain in the Lord.” The scene of everlasting reward is then ; the season of present duties is now.

That doctrine which seems to us so abstract and unproductive, the apostle says is fraught with blessed and practical results. It is after he has delineated what the resurrection is, that he shows that when man labours and abounds in labour he does so from the patient hope of that very result which seems at first a speculation, but is on better knowledge a practical and powerful impulse. And therefore when the last Easter Sunday shall dawn upon the world, and the trumpet shall sound, that which inspires your toils, elevates your hopes, and makes you abundant in whatsoever things are pure, and just, and lovely, and honest, and of good report, will be realized in the resurrection and restoration of all that the cannon has destroyed upon the battle-field ; all that the wild beast has torn in pieces ; all that disease has wasted and the worm has fed on. Whatever the sea has received and stored away in its unsounded depths, whatever the earth contains beneath its winding-sheet of snow, or amid its countless sand-drifts in Arabian or African desert, or in stony pyramids, or beneath the green turf, or in mausolea of bronze,—all will come forth at that royal sound ; atom come to atom ; faces that we knew on earth will shine with richer beauty and be reflected with clearer sharpness ; and this body, that fell corruptible and mortal, and de-



cayed and mouldered in the earth, shall rise a bright shrine, a holy chancel, for the return of that Levite, the soul, whom Jesus Christ brings with him; and this earth, purified and refined by its last baptism, shall appear more glorious than when its coronal was Eden in its virgin beauty, and the morning stars sang together over a new-born orb. As the family of old rejoiced when the prodigal returned; so when this prodigal sister orb, that has travelled far from the family of unfallen sister stars, and has been feeding upon husks, and weeping, and sorrowing, and groaning with pain, earnestly waiting to be delivered, shall be restored to the sisterhood of stars, the universe will ring with the joyous anthem, "This our sister orb was lost and is found; was dead and is alive. Let us make merry and sing, Worthy is the Lamb, for He hath redeemed us by His blood, and made us kings and priests unto our God, and she and we shall reign with Him for ever and for ever."

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